

ROLLING STONE

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No. 20

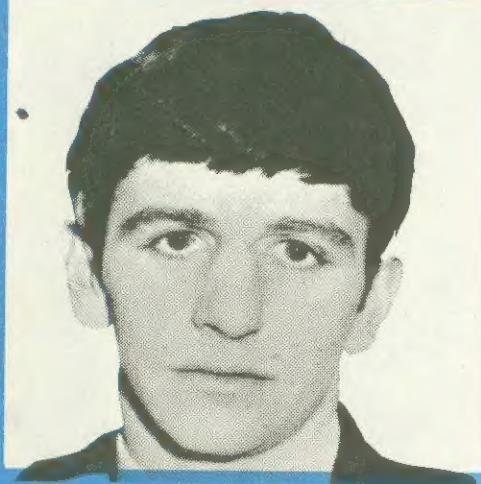
OCTOBER 26, 1968

THIRTY-FIVE CENTS

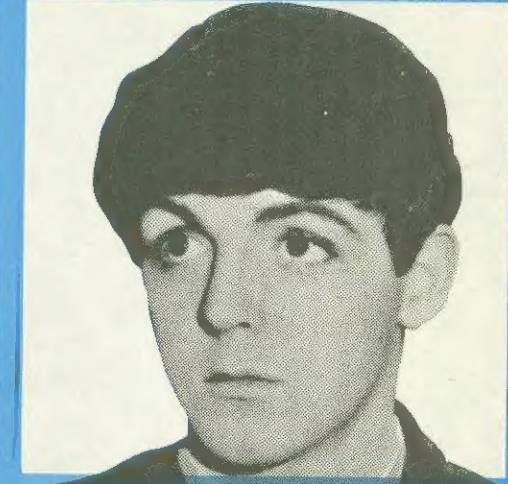
THE BEATLES TODAY

ALSO: THE ROLLING STONE INTERVIEW WITH CASS ELLIOT

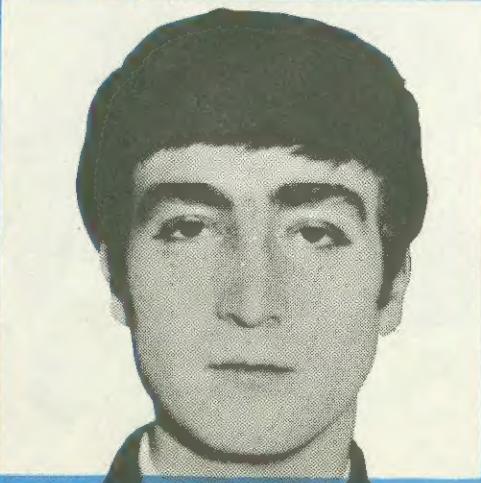
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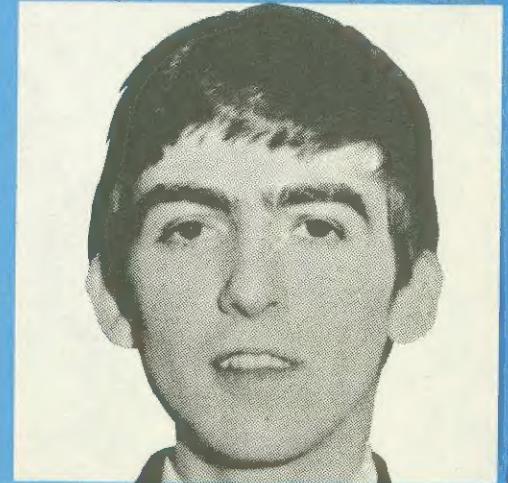
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OCTOBER 26, 1968

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THE ROLLING STONE INTERVIEW: CASS ELLIOT — PAGE 19



DOORS, AIRPLANE IN MIDDLE EARTH

BY JONATHAN COTT

LONDON — "Never ask a door what it thinks. No need to ask an airplane."

I found this message scribbled on a piece of paper left outside the Roundhouse where the Doors and Jefferson Airplane played to 2,000 persons on September 7 and 8.

The concert was to be one of the top pop events of the London season. The musical press had been covering both groups for the preceding three weeks, speculating about the significance of American "underground" groups for the British pop scene. Arthur Brown, Stevie Winwood, Jim Capaldi and others attended.

Jefferson Airplane arrived in London a week earlier, flying in five tons of equipment, bringing a party of fifteen including Head Lights, and drove around the city — at least part of the time — in a double-decker bus.

The Airplane got off to a start playing outdoors—their most familiar medium, but a novelty in Britain —on the Isle of Wight, and at a free concert in Hampstead Heath.

It was 40 degrees at 3 a.m.—scattered campfires around the field—when they played at an open air Isle of Wight festival, and it poured at Parliament Hill on Hampstead Heath where, inside of what looked like an amalgam of a finely-made Swedish

matchbox and a neon-lit toaster, the Airplane performed springily and happily for lots of dancing children, kids with knapsacks, and other dewy people. Even in the rain—mad dogs and Englishmen attending—the group recreated Golden Gate park in a city where open clouds, and not the sky, touch your head. At the Roundhouse, with visuals by Head Lights, the Airplane played two sets each night with its usual gaiety and unpretentiousness.

The Airplane's show at the Roundhouse, though slow to get chugging according to a British critic, was well-received. The imported San Francisco lightshow was acknowledged as

Continued on Page 12

San Francisco Going Strong In Spite of Bad-Mouthing

BY BEN FONG-TORRES

SAN FRANCISCO—If bad-mouthing could kill, the San Francisco rock scene would have been long gone, eulogized, and forgotten by now.

But, with all the liquidity and mysteriousness of a fistful of mercury, the seemingly amorphous "scene" has burst into lively new fragments with each blow from the nay-sayers.

So the Jefferson Airplane, Grateful Dead, Big Brother, Quicksilver Messenger Service, Country Joe, Charlatans, and Great Society — these 1965-66 bands were, as events have proved, not so much fat-feeding pioneers as, together, the "first wave" of what has become the forefront concern of the pop music business: San Francisco rock.

With the nationwide popularization of hippie-nouveau art, liquid light shows, and dance/concerts came the second San Francisco wave: Moby Grape, Steve Miller Band, Blue Cheer, Mother Earth, Lee Michaels, and the Loading Zone.

And now, a year after the so-called "Death of the Hippie" rites in the Haight-Ashbury, followed by the violence-spurred transformation of Haight Street into a boulevard of boarded store windows, the third wave is upon us. And the San Francisco rock scene has never been healthier.

Riding the crest of this third wave are no less than 36 "progressive" or "underground" (depending on who's talking about it) rock groups in various stages of progress. All of them call the San Francisco-Bay Area their home, and love to do so. They include transplants from Chicago, Seattle, and San Antonio; from England, across the continent and Walnut Creek across the bay. They come from Wisconsin as already formed bands, or as individual musicians looking to form bands—some are unknowns, and some are well-known. Whatever they are, they resemble iron filings drawn to a magnet.

Close behind these thirty-five or forty surfacing bands are the record companies, whose hesitant steps around the city last year, when it was gushingly dubbed the "Liverpool of the USA," have turned into frenzied galloping. Open-mouthed label execs drool over national charts dotted with such names as the Airplane, Big Brother, Country Joe, Quicksilver, Steve Miller, and the Dead, not to mention the Youngbloods and the Electric Flag.

And on the horizon, for an ever greater scene: a small gang of new and improved recording studios, most of them eight-tracks, are now being built in and near San Francisco.

It's all happened fast. Five years ago, the hilly city was known, in pop music, mainly for Johnny Mathis. By late 1964, you could add Bobby Freeman ("The Swin"), the Beau Brummels ("Laugh, Laugh"), the Veitables, the Mojo Men, the Tiki's, to name the more memorable—but little more. For phonographic action, New York, Philadelphia, L.A., and Mersey were about it.

But however volatile or sudden the influx of industry attention—and money—into the study old Victorian flats of San Francisco band members, the excitement is far from unwarranted; the record company scouts, far from blind.

In terms of Top-40 success, San Francisco groups have not been par-

Continued on Page 10



BUTTER BLOWS BETTER BLUES

IN MY OWN DREAM,
the new album by the
Butterfield Blues
Band, now, from



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CORRESPONDENCE, LOVE LETTERS & ADVICE

SIRS:

I thoroughly enjoyed your probing interview with the Who's Peter Townshend. I'm happy to see that the Who are finally gaining the recognition they deserve in this country.

There were, however, a few minor errors in your article. You incorrectly stated the Who's first recording was "My Generation." To the best of my knowledge, the Who's first single was "I Can't Explain/Bald Headed Woman" (Decca 45-31725). I'm fairly certain that "Substitute/Waltz For A Pig" (Atco 45-6409) was also recorded before "My Generation." You also claimed Townshend to be the "idol of the mod cult" when, in fact, singer Daltrey unquestionably holds this honor.

Of course, it is quite easy to overlook these slight errors in view of your detailed and objective reporting of the pop music scene the finest anywhere. After all, when the Doors can rewrite the lyrics to the Kinks' "All Day and All of the Night" and watch it zoom to No. 1 on the charts, it's nice to have something sane to turn to.

Keep up the good work!

DAVID MASSE
 CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

SIRS:

No plank in a convention platform has ever meant anything binding, so McCarthy's defeat was a pretty irrelevant reason for pushing to get one's head bashed in, physically in Chicago, or spiritually at home. The youth protest was irrelevant because they weren't protesting Vietnam or the merciless arm of the draft, but were contesting their right to overthrow this society's conventions.

Young people are trying to prove themselves stronger than the pessimists who see nothing in the offing but Toynbee's or some equally inhuman cycle theory of war as man's way of surviving with man. They are possibly ready to believe (not just

say) that brotherhood can evolve in a way that transcends political whims, apart from the unbearable cycle of hunger-dependency-tryanny.

Younger people have always been more optimistic than the reigning class because they've more intellectual and emotional ammunition to attack the indecent status quo than those who have long accepted it. For this capacity for changes alone, youth now and in ten years cannot stop until power is theirs, and the polarity between the older and younger ends because the old have too accepted optimism as a possibility.

Had I been writing the night of the nomination and the Hilton beatings my article would have matched yours in bitterness and single-mindedness I'm sure. You're right—the left, new and old, is self-indulgent and self-centered and for discussing that fact alone, your articles were much ahead of any publications after Chicago.

Could you do something for free? One: because I have no money to pay for it and two: because brotherhood and all is what this request is all about . . . could you please print this address and ask readers to send money to:

American Committee to keep Biafra Alive
 2440 B'way, New York, N.Y.
 Checks made to: Operation Airlift
 Biafra.

TERESA CHENERY
 PALO ALTO, CALIF.

SIRS:

It was in Philadelphia while I was scouting for my record company that I had the first opportunity to obtain one of your publications on Walnut Street (and I must say you are one of the liveliest papers—full of good information, gossip, sugar and spice). Since then I have been picking up the paper in Chicago and New York.

I appreciated your articles on Janis Joplin, Bob Dylan, BB King, James

Cotton and Big Mama Thornton. I have had the good luck to have been through every blues period in our history of recordings, — and may I call our latest one, the Frantic Period. I just would love to know what my old buddies Bessie Smith and Ida Cox would have said when they heard the likes of Janis Joplin? (Smiles!)

When I first began there were no mikes, no electricity (ha! ha!) We had to wail, man! And there were no critics. The audience were the critics—and behold the thee—if you met with their displeasure.

My best,

VICTORIA SFIVEY
 BROOKLYN

SIRS:

After reading the rather lengthy "Everybody's Chicago Blues," I concluded that I had absorbed nothing to add to my intellectual capacity. And no wonder! Besides never getting to the point, the article was based on unsupported opinions and assumptions glittering among the too numerous generalizations. Which makes me wonder how well the proof-reader and the anonymous author fared in English class (which is supervision on my part that the two ever did attend an institution of educational learning).

(I hope you noticed how the bulk of the previous sentence can be compacted. If negative, you failed to grasp the satiric overtones of my rhetoric.)

DAVE BARRY
 SAN FRANCISCO

SIRS:

Your article condemning the reprocessed for stereo bandwagon neglected one important aspect of the monster.

Simple channelling of lows into one speaker and highs into the other is just the beginning, and although it

—Continued on Page 30

NEW BEATLES DOUBLE ALBUM DUE ON NOVEMBER 16

LONDON — The Beatles are back in action again. They will release a double-LP set on November 16, simultaneously in the United States and Britain. The set will contain 24 new Beatles songs and will not include recent singles such as "Lady Madonna" and "Hey Jude."

The Beatles have also videotaped a "live" performance of "Hey Jude" for television promotion, and Paul McCartney and George Harrison have been quoted recently in the British press to the effect that they would enjoy appearing again.

"We will be doing a live television show later in the year," Paul said. "I don't know about a concert, but it might lead to that. The idea of singing live is much more appealing now. We are beginning to miss it. I love the idea of playing again—and I know the others feel the same way."

The "Hey Jude" film was done in a television studio, unrehearsed, for showing on two British programs. (In the United States it will be aired on the Smothers Brothers Television show.) The Beatles were accompanied by 300 extras and a thirty-six piece orchestra.

Also on the Beatles front, the cartoon film *Yellow Submarine* will be released in the United States on December 15, accompanied by a fairly large merchandising program on the part of the film company. And *Magical Mystery Tour* will be made available to colleges for showing in the late fall.

The double-LP release will be the Beatles' first album on the Apple label. Other than the Hey Jude/Revolution single, the only other Apple success has been Mary Hopkin's "Those Were The Days" which replaced "Hey Jude" as the number one song on the British charts.

Accompanying the Beatles LP release, will be other Apple records including: the soundtrack to *Wonderwall*, a film scored by George Harrison, recorded in Bombay and London; an album by the Modern Jazz Quartet, which has signed with Apple; and an album by a North Carolina folk-singer named James Taylor.

No decision has been made so far on the packaging, the cover and the title of the Beatles release. However, it is expected to be a quite simple package. In fact, according to Derek Taylor, the Beatles' press officer, the whole package will be characterized by "a marked absence of psychedelia."

The release will have 24 new Beatles songs. At this moment, what exactly will be on the album has not been decided, because the Beatles expect to be recording more songs for possible use through the middle of October. Currently, the Beatles have recorded over 35 new songs for possible use on the album, a number which they will cut down to 24. In fact, the problem now is what to leave off, not how to get any more.

Of the songs, recorded, some of the ones definitely picked include:

"Back In the USSR," on which Paul sings lead, more or less an up-tempo rock and roll song, featuring humorous musical moments from Fats Domino and the Beach Boys, among others.

"Mother Nature's Son," another Paul McCartney solo, with Paul on guitar and an occasional brass backing.

"Birthday," "Everyone's Got

Something to Hide," "Blackbird," "Rocky Racoon," "Sexie Sadie," and "Not Guilty," one of George's compositions, have also been decided on for use in the records.

The rest are still to be picked. The majority of the songs were written in India, some in London, and all are very good and will be great to hear. Paul McCartney has been especially prolific in the past few months, and the albums will be dominated by his work. The material includes a "bit of everything" according to Taylor, "and are very simple, straightforward songs, with a lot of rock and roll. There is a lot

of freedom in them. The Beatles are very aware of their roots, more aware of them than they have ever been, and this will show very strongly."

George has written about three or four songs, more than he usually contributes. Ringo has written one song by himself, co-wrote another, and sings lead on them. Most of the songs are up-tempo, with only one or two ballads.

Taylor, speaking from London, described the recordings in general to Rolling Stone this way:

"Imagine a double *Sgt. Pepper's* album, all at once, the only

difference being that this is 1968, and not 1967, which was also a very special year. But, keeping in mind the different climate, imagine the record to be that way. They are much more free these days. There is a lack of guile in them and their approach, and that is what this record is like."

Tapes of some of the songs have already found their way to the United States, and one educated listener described them this way: "The early Beatles up to date."



LINDA EASTMAN

EX-BEATLE BEST WINS PLAYBOY LIBEL SUIT

Ex-Beatle drummer Pete Best, who is now slicing bread in a Liverpool bakery for eighteen pounds a week, has obtained a settlement in his libel suit against the Beatles, Playboy Magazine and Ringo Starr.

Through Barry Goldberg (not the musician), his American lawyer, the 28-year-old Best has fought his case in court for the past three years, claiming eight million dollars in damages.

The charge of libel has centered on an interview with the Beatles published in Playboy, in

which Ringo said of Best, "He used to take little pills to make him ill." Ringo replaced Best in 1962 when Brian Epstein fired him after two and a half years with the Beatles.

The amount of money is being kept secret. Says Mr. Goldberg: "One of the conditions of the settlement is that we cannot divulge just how much it is."

"The money is less than we wanted," says Best, "but I was content to take the advice of my lawyers and accept the figure offered. If I'd decided to go on

fighting for more, I would have had to go to America for what might have been a long court case. And with a wife and two children I couldn't have afforded to go."

After Best left the Beatles, who were on the threshold of fame, he formed his own group. But the Pete Best Four never achieved real success and two years ago the Four decided to seek "safe" jobs outside the show business.

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'I LEFT MY AMP IN SAN FRANCISCO': THIRD PHASE

Continued from Page One

ticularly noteworthy. There were the Airplane's smashes, "White Rabbit" and "Somebody to Love," Blue Cheer's "Summertime Blues," for Sly and the Family Stone "Dance to the Music," and the Sopwith Camel's very successful "Hello Hello." (The Camel moved to New York after the single hit the charts; put out an unsuccessful follow-up, and disbanded. Two important fragments of the group, however, have returned to San Francisco and, today producer Eric Jacobsen and vocalist/writer Peter Kramer are top heads at Sweet Reliable Productions, under the well-monitored wings of Warner Brothers/Records).

More important than its own hits, however, San Francisco is getting notice in the radio and record trade, as an undeniable, unpredictable force in the breaking of national hits. "Get Together" by the Youngbloods; "Time" by the Chambers Brothers; the Doors' monstrous "Light My Fire," and the Band's "The Weight" are among the tunes and artists San Francisco has "broken" or "made happen" in the phrase of the trade.

And when you add the national and international acts introduced through the ballrooms and San Francisco was the major influence in making some of these acts big-time, most notable among them Cream; then one begins to grasp the ever-growing size and varied nature of the concentric circles around San Francisco as they react to the impact of both her splashes and her waves.

In a city where the ballroom scene (the Family Dog's Avalon and Bill Graham's Fillmore West) continues to thrive a full three years after they began; where two major showcases for emerging talent have recently opened (the Matrix night club, first home of the Airplane, has finally re-opened, and Fillmore West holds public auditions for surfacing bands every Tuesday night); and where barely-above-ground airwaves are wide enough for three "progressive rock" album-cut, FM stations, there is plenty of room—if not some need—for all of the bands.

The San Francisco hills, then, are alive with music, and by and large, from first ripple to third wave, it's been good, solid music. As Graham, the burgeoning Howard Hughes of the dance scene, puts it, "Youngsters age 20 today have been listening to this music, seriously, for three years now. They've heard the local bands and they've heard the big, older groups we've brought in—Muddy Waters, Chuck Berry, all of those. So today, you just can't put shock music past them."

But the practical question remains: Why San Francisco? When the studios, the companies, and the heavy music traditions are all plugged in and anchored in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, why a comparatively tiny town on a bay? The answer is in the question, and from talking to members of more than a dozen of these "third wave" bands, the conglomeration answer comes out something like this: "We don't dig recording as much as playing live music; we don't need or want to sign ourselves away to a record label unless and until we're ready; and fuck tradition."

Opposition to or fear of recording contracts is a recurring theme with the newer bands, just as it was for early holdouts like the Dead, Quicksilver, and Steve Miller.

But every professional group's eventual aim is a solid, income-producing pact, and as artists begin to flex their contrapuntal muscles, demanding and getting more and more control over their music, it is only a matter of time before we see a contractual saturation of San Francisco, if such a saturation hasn't already occurred.

After only nine months together, It's a Beautiful Day signed late last month with Columbia Records. The six-man group (including former Orchestra member David LaFlemme on electric violin; his wife Linda on organ, and a chick singer named Patti Santos) was pieced together

through bulletin board notices in L.A.

"We got offers from all the major labels," advisor John Walker claims, "including Apple." The band finally decided on Columbia after the company's President, Clive Davis, offered a contract providing them with independent production and publishing rights; final say on artwork, and firm Columbia commitments on promotion for the band—and this is not to mention financial considerations. About the only thing the group didn't get was Clive Davis for their equipment boy.

"San Francisco's become a center of attention for companies because it's more of a creative outlet than

settlers like the Youngbloods (from New York) now headquartered in Inverness at the tip of Marin County; newly-formed bands like Seatrail (composed of remnants of the Blues Project) who've gestated in Mill Valley for nearly a year now; rejuvenated groups like Sir Douglas Quintet Plus Two (all the way from Texas, like Janis Joplin and Steve Miller), and, of course, H. P. Lovecraft.

"For us," Edwards says, "the first time we worked here last year, we just had to stay. The vibes were so good. This is just a peaceful and groovy place."

Ex-Miller band member Curly Cooke had good reason for moving his band from Wisconsin to the San

"and they get it here, so that you have a consistent stimulation of the musicians to do the best they can. The level of quality is so high that they've got this constant challenge to do well."

As a radio man, Donahue sees format-free "underground" stations' role as no small cog. But he himself was the big chief at Autumn Records four years ago, working with the late KYA disc-jockey Bob Mitchell to put out the first string of rock hits out of San Francisco (Beau Brummels, Vejtables, et al). So a healthy studio scene, he points out, is vital.

San Francisco's studio scene is healthy, but still no more than a pimply-faced adolescent in comparison with L.A. and New York. For years, the only studios around were Coast and Golden State, four-track operations that are not sophisticated or adaptable enough for the requirements of rock and roll.

Now, at least three major new studios are being built in the city. Filmways and Wally Heider (of L.A.'s Studio Three) should have an eight-track setup by early 1969, with plans to go 16-track eventually.

Harry McCune Sound Service, located near downtown, should have his eight-track studio completed by the end of this year. And a twelve-track operation is in the final stages of construction by New York's Apostolic Studios at the Pacific High Recording Company, in Sausalito.

If it sounds like frenetic activity and heavy breathing on the part of studio owners, it's understandable. There's business to be done. Right now, down the Peninsula, in San Mateo, Paul Curcio's new Pacific Studios, a spacious eight-track operation, is getting heavy bookings, despite the commute trip. Among others, the Grateful Dead, Linn County, and Country Joe's Fishes have made use of Curcio's \$50,000 board and recorders. And there is the solid but small Trident Studio in the basement of the Columbus Towers. In Berkeley, Sierra Sound Studios has been a major contributor to the Scene; this is where Country Joe and the Fish recorded their first LP.

Still, there has been talk of much more in terms of studio setups (within the last two years, Columbia was planning a studio at the old Fillmore Auditorium; Kama-Sutra wanted the Avalon, and Graham began plans for a studio at the Geary Temple next door to his old Fillmore room), and there is a real need for a pointed maturation of the recording scene here.

The fact is, seven studios and 200 bands (that's approximately how many have been associated with San Francisco these past three years) do not in themselves comprise an adequate recording scene. If recording is what's really going to establish San Francisco as a musical nerve center—and that's what it'll take—then the city sorely needs another influx—this time of solid, independent producers.

With three new major recording facilities in the works, all of them being built to hopefully meet the needs of rock and roll work, one must look still a step further for the establishment of a recording scene in San Francisco as a major breakthrough:

Rock and roll albums do not need good studios so much as they need good producers. So far, the best San Francisco records have been recorded and produced primarily outside of San Francisco and done by A&R men who have no association with the local scene. Although in some cases record companies have been able to assign producers to groups, these companies are no longer maintaining large staffs of A&R men for such use.

The trend is toward independent production deals, such as the ones John Simon has with Columbia, Capitol and a host of other companies; or Tom Wilson and so on down the line. Some local bands have been put with producers for better or worse (the Airplane, with Rick Garrard at one point; the Grateful Dead with Dave Hassinger at

Continued on Next Page



any other city," Walker says. "They see potential and raw talent all over the place."

Exposure of bands through area clubs and ballrooms is a vital factor, says Greg Young, guitarist/leader of Womb, a year-old "folk-blues-Motown" group (that's his definition) now on the verge of singing with a company.

But Young disagrees with the comparisons that have been drawn between San Francisco and Liverpool. "Things seem to be much more artistic in the initial stages here than they were in Liverpool," To Young, third-wave rock is but a beginning.

Liverpool, back at the turn of the decade, blossomed forth with a club called the Cavern and a rash of leather-jacketed beat groups (among them, of course, what were to become known as the Beatles), but any real similarity to the Bay Area metropolis, in terms of atmosphere, availability of showcases, and recording facilities, is dubious, at best. "Liverpool," according to an early issue of Rolling Stone, "was a place you left—San Francisco is a place to stay."

And not just San Francisco. Marin County, across the Golden Gate Bridge twenty minutes from the city, offers the houseboats of Sausalito (Dino Valente just moved into one) and the rustic houses of Mill Valley and Mt. Tamalpais, nestled in woods and overlooking forests of trees that overlook the majestically cavernous walls of the Mount. In early evenings, envious San Franciscans can stand high in the Pacific Heights district, in nippy, fog-shrouded weather, and watch the sun guarding the good life in marvelous Marin.

Literally dozens of musicians—whole groups like Curly Cooke's Hurdy Gurdy Band; Linn County, and H. P. Lovecraft—are there; new bands like West and Clover, as well as seasoned pros like Bloomfield and Quicksilver, have resided there, and dozens more can be found, at one time or another, at the heliport in Sausalito, where numerous local bands book time for rehearsal and cross-group jam sessions. In fact, the heliport hangar has long since been converted into about half a dozen rehearsal rooms.

Lovecraft, the harmony-heavy, nightclub-light quintet from Chicago, has two places in Mill Valley, and lead guitarist George Edwards sees nothing short of expansion for his group and more musicians migrating to the West Coast.

"A lot of old friends from back east are moving out here soon," he promises. They'd be joining early

Francisco Bay.

"Musicians in the midwest, or any place where not much music's happening, are really tight together," says Curly. "Music is one thing, but it's also because, except for the college students, the musicians are the only freaks on the scene. One thing you can do is leave—and we left."

And midwest audiences, in Cooke's view, were where it's at—but only if sophomorism was where it's at. "In Wisconsin you can drink beer at 18," he explains, "and there are thousands of places where you can get gigs for a band. But the crowds there came only to get drunk and pour beer on each other's heads. They didn't come to hear music, especially anything far out."

"I think Wisconsin must be the 'Louie Louie' center of the world."

Pete Townshend of the Who has said, simply, that he, like all other London musicians who have been on recent tours, considers San Francisco his second home, and the place where he would live if not in London.

KSAN program director Tom Donahue, the often-disputed king of rappers in the hip radio community, sees an electrically luminous future here. "This city," in fact, "will be the center of musical development within ten years," he says.

Indirectly quoting Al Kooper, he continues: "One of the bigger things is this communal living thing. Groups are getting to know each other personally—from the beginning, so they can detect any conflicts—and there's less breakup of bands as a result."

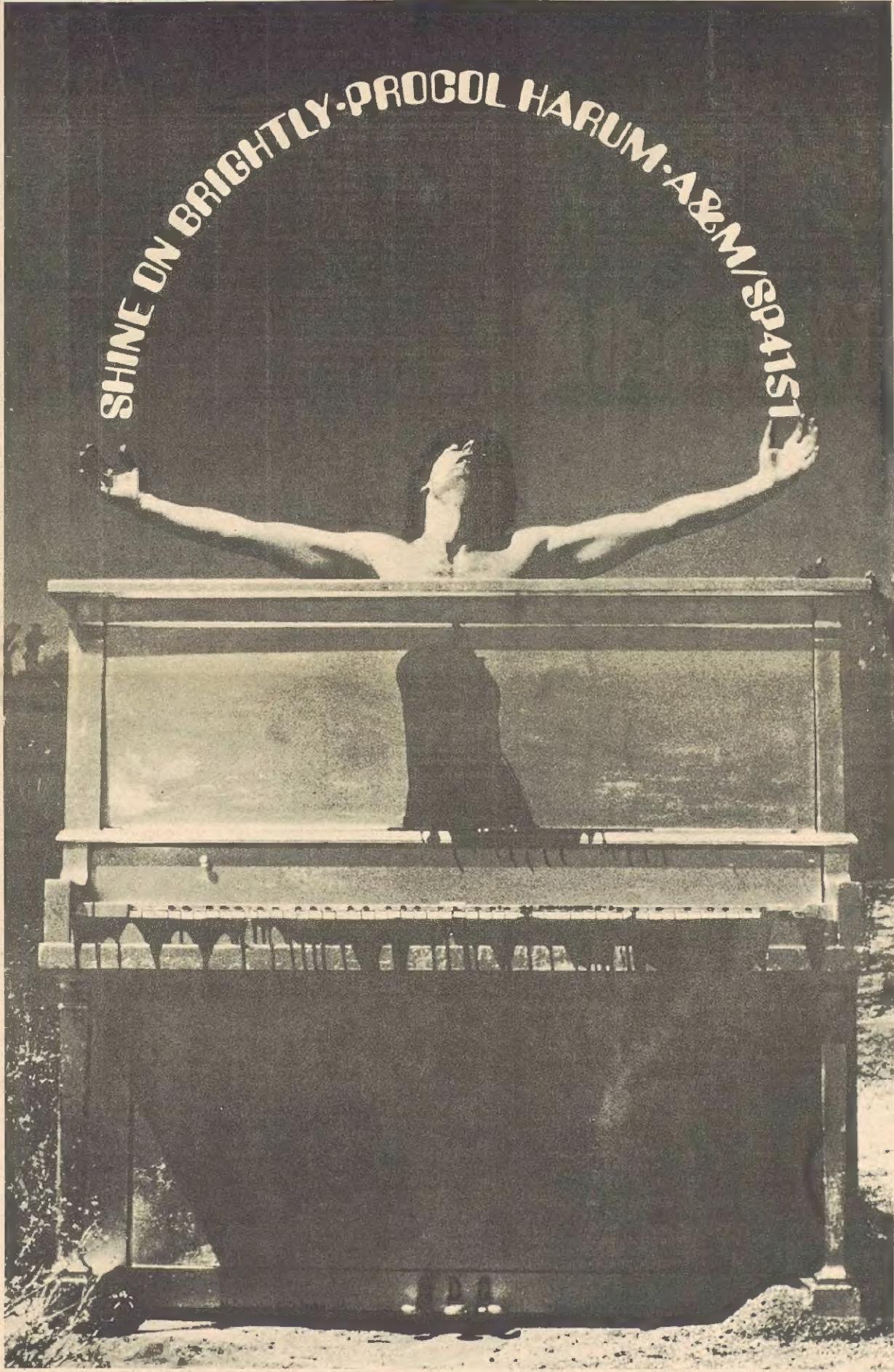
Too, there's the availability of work for bands. Good rock night clubs range from the New Orleans House in Berkeley to the Lion's Share and the Ark in Sausalito, with a big high school-oriented rock scene in the East Bay sandwiched in between. And besides the Fillmore West and Avalon, barely a month goes by without someone announcing plans for a new dance/concert scene. The major attempt—the Ron Rakow-Airplane Dead takeover of the Carousel Ballroom (since then turned by Graham into Fillmore West)—was a financial disaster.

There are also less successful, but continuing dance/concerts at the Straight Theater on Haight St. (now showing movies backed by live bands); the New Committee Theater, and numerous smaller halls.

Then, there's the increasing demand for San Francisco bands to hit the road as supporting acts for touring concert artists.

"The bands have got to have an opportunity to play," says Donahue,

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BRIAN JONES FINED IN DOPE CASE—BUT NO JAIL

LONDON—A jury found Rolling Stone Brian Jones guilty of possession of marijuana on September 26th. He was fined but not given a jail sentence as had been feared, making it possible for him to work with his fellow musicians in their newest movie.

The conviction, Jones' second, brought a fine of \$120 and penalty of \$253 in court costs. Reminding the 26-year-old musician that he is on probation for his conviction last October, court chairman R. E. Seaton told Jones "you must really watch your step."

Seaton declined to give Brian a jail sentence for his violation of probation. Mick Jagger was quoted as saying, "We are very pleased that Brian did not have to go to jail. Money does not matter."

Now it seems the Rolling Stones are almost certain to star in a major film—described as "weird, mad, bizarre"—to be made by a Hollywood production company in Africa in late December. The movie will be filmed in color, with Mick Jagger as the central figure.

Keith Richard will have a supporting role, as will Brian Jones. Jagger and Richard will write

the entire musical score, although it is unlikely the group will appear performing any of the numbers. They play opposing characters in the story.

The movie is described by Jagger as "a family film," and is also likely to include Anita Pallenberg — at present shooting with Jagger in *Performance* and possibly Marianne Faithfull. The script, by an American writer, is being kept secret.

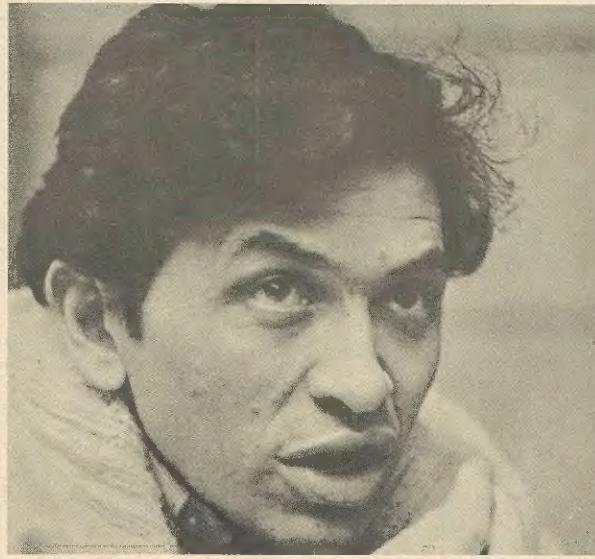
The Jean-Luc Godard movie *One Plus One*, in which the Stones are shown at length in recording studios, is completed. It was flown to the US to be shown at the New York Film Festival, September 17-28. The film has been chosen as London Festival Choice for the London Film Festival in November.

Meanwhile, no definite word has arrived concerning the dispute about the bathroom-wall cover of the Stones' next album. Once the matter is decided, it will take only two weeks to get the record, finished two months ago, into the stores.

Two weeks ago, the Stones took a full page advertisement in the British pop paper, *Melody Maker*, thanking the readers for their votes in the annual pop

poll. In the advertisement, the cover of the disputed album (printed in the last issue of *Rolling Stone*) was reproduced with the following text accompanying it: "This is the front of our new album which we finished two months ago. Due to religious disagreements, no release date has

been set." The copy continued with one more sentence, suggesting that readers who wanted the album out write to the record company. In the United States, inquiries and complaints may be addressed to: Mr. Toller-Bond, President, London Records, 539 W. 25th St., New York.



San Francisco Groups Make Waves

—Continued from Preceding Page
one point.) Other bands have gone out and found their own (Steve Miller Band went to London for Glyn Johns.)

But no top-flight producers are now in San Francisco, with the exception of Eric Jacobson, whose orientation is country, not rock. Mercury has established an A&R office in San Francisco to assist its host of newly signed bands in this area (Linn County, Mother Earth, Mourning Glory, H. P. Lovecraft, Sons of Champlin, Harvey Mandel, Sir Douglas and finally the reconstituted Charlatans, the established first band of the first wave.)

But Mercury's A&R operation is not a major factor at this point, with Abe "Voco" Kesh (whose work is still at the Blue Cheer level) and Milan Melvin (formerly an advertising salesman, whose production talents are unknown so far) on staff.

Something more is called for: either the influx of one or two top-flight producers or the development of some local talent in this field, who could be associated either with a label, act as a free-lance or be on staff at one of the new studios. All this goes for engineers, too.

As with any of the aspects of this business, there's been talk about home-based record labels. Fantasy, a small sized jazz-oriented company, is the only established label now operating from San Francisco and has a current national rock hit with the S.F.-based Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Suzie Q."

With the hopeful migration of top-flight producers into the area and the omnipresent desire on the part of top bands to maintain the most independence possible, a co-op, local record company being talked about may someday be a reality.

For now, independence, as such, is regimented and parcelled out by record companies as they continue the storm into San Francisco. Irv Green's Phillips-Mercury-Smash organization seems to have more flowers and more hair than any of the onrushing labels.

Others of the surfacing bands that have been signed are soft-sound groups West (Epile) and Rejoice (Dunhill/ABC); Vanguard has Notes from the Underground; Fantasy has the Creedence Clearwater Revival; ABC, Rejoice and Salvation; Capitol, Mad River; and A&M is working with Seatrail and Petrus. Too, the Flamin' Groovies are putting out

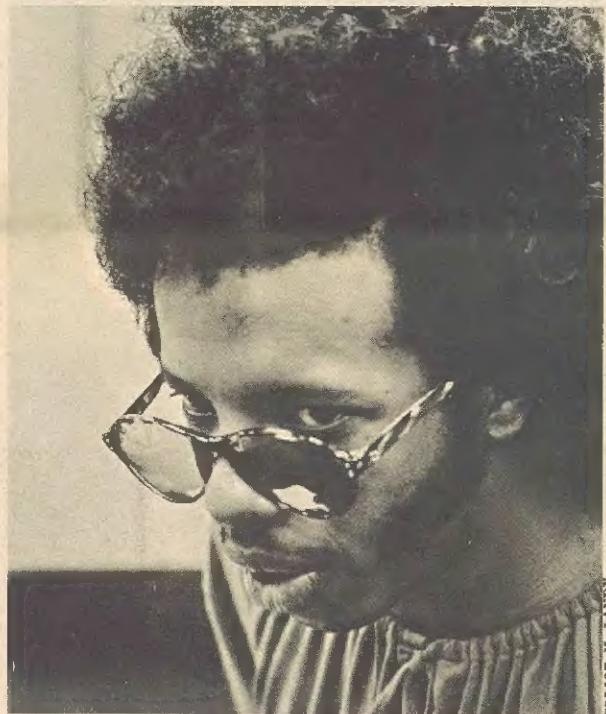
their own records (their first was a ten-inch LP on their Snazz label), while Berkeley's Fruious Bandersnatch have issued a seven-inch extended play record.

All together, there are roughly 45 bands based or consistently working in the San Francisco Bay Area. Consistent and working are bands like: the Country Weather Band, Womb, A. B. Shky, the Ace of Cups, Shades of Joy, and Clover, Anonymous Artists of America, Cold Blood, Phoenix, Marvin Gardens, Black Pearl, Indian Head Band, Mint Tattoo, Mt. Rushmore, Black and White Incorporated, Dan Hicks and his Hot Licks, Wildflower, Charlie Musselwhite Blues Band, and the Cleanliness and Godliness Skiffle Band. And there are, of course, more to come, and probably a dozen names left off this list, as it's impossible to keep track of them. But they are there and will eventually out.

So the third wave seems, in actuality, no more than the first major sweep of organized music activity for San Francisco. Now, after all is played and done, what does it mean, this invasion of amps, synthesizers, hype, and bodies into this land of the ever-Rolling Renaissance?

For one thing, it doesn't mean a slick, monolithic, definable "San Francisco Sound," Tongue n' Groove Lynn Hughes assures. "The San Francisco Sound never existed," she says, "in the sense of bands sounding alike. The city's attracted people from all areas of the country, and they're musically searching, here, on the same trip. But the trip is to be yourself, and improve your sound. So San Francisco's sound is distinguished by differences."

And the man who has helped to see it all through, Bill Graham, is moving with the waves. Besides his new weekly auditions ("so the many new bands around can get a chance to play bigger halls") for which he encourages participation from younger bands of all musical persuasions, he holds a few nice words for the city: "We're just now going through the best music, after three years of sifting through 97 million bands. The ballrooms are going strong, better than ever, and the future looks real good. I don't call this a 'third wave' at all. We had more of a leveling off after the first wave, and we're just now having a resurgence of good music."



Sly Stone's Bum Trip to London

LONDON—Sly and the Family Stone ran into trouble, in the form of a bust for possession of cannabis, as soon as they touched down in London Airport. It was all down from there on. After a week of hassles with promoters, the BBC and the press, their British tour was called off.

Larry Graham Jr., bass guitarist and vocalist for the group, was charged with the drug violation in London Airport on September 11. He was set free on bail until his hearing later in the month.

The group had been scheduled to appear on a BBC pop music program, but because of the bust they were dropped. "I'm not bitter about it," commented Sly. "In fact, under the circumstances I'd probably have done the same myself."

"I just hope that the people concerned with the show change their minds when they find out that the whole incident is stupid."

After the BBC cancellation, alleged a spokesman for their promoter, Don Arden, the group refused to play any dates. The spokesman told the New Musical Express: "Sly insisted on having special amplifying equipment for his organ and would not go on stage without it. We offered him a compromise, which has been accepted by people like Ray Charles and the Small Faces, but he turned it down."

In their action-filled week, Sly and Family were also warned about "gesticulating" to motorists outside a London club, and Sly failed to turn up for two press conferences. The tour was canceled on the 17th.



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Random Notes

Rick Danko, Big Pink's bass player, broke his neck in a car accident three weeks ago on a foggy road in upstate New York. Although the injury was not serious—he is expected out of the hospital in a few weeks—it was almost a too-fatal repetition of the same sort of accident Bob Dylan had two years ago.

Meanwhile, the band was in New York City a few weeks ago at the Fillmore West to see Staple Singers and Traffic in a Friday night concert. The band was given VIP treatment in a special balcony box. And for an encore, the Staple Singers did "The Weight."

Bob Dylan is running around too. He was in Los Angeles a few weeks ago at the "American Music Show" presented by Pinnacle. Dylan will be featured on the cover of a forthcoming issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*, sooner or later, in conjunction with an article by Al Aronowitz.

Nicky Hopkins, the fantastic young English pianist who has been featured on many excellent records out of London, has joined the Jeff Beck group and will be appearing with them on a United States tour beginning in October. Hopkins can be heard on the Beatles' latest single, "Revolution," and is featured on the upcoming Rolling Stones album. He has also played on earlier Stones records, the Beck LP, and numerous other recordings. With him as an additional member, this may bring the Beck group's live show up to par with their record.

A second Supersession album is in the works, with Al Kooper and Michael Bloomfield, a live LP, featuring Kooper and Bloomfield backed by drummer Skip Prokop (formerly of the Paupers) and bassist John Kahn during three concerts at the Fillmore West. The material will probably include a version of "The Weight." In any case, the artwork for the cover has already been decided: a photo montage showing the musicians on the date jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge.

Kooper, who is under contract to Columbia Records as a producer, is also coming up with his own solo LP, titled *I Stand Alone*. The artwork for this one shows Kooper's face superimposed over a shot of the Statue of Liberty. (It could be titled *Electric Ego*, but that's cool.) A third of the songs for the record were done in New York, a third in Los Angeles (including one backed by the Don Ellis Band, whom Kooper is producing as well), Stevie Winwood's "Coloured Rain") and a third in Nashville with the musicians who did *Blonde on Blonde*. Included in the Nashville set is a Johnnie Tabor number, "Toehold." It's one of the best of the album.

(Mike Bloomfield didn't make the last of the Supersession gigs at the Fillmore, having collapsed in exhaustion and ending up in the hospital in Marin County. He's O.K., so don't worry, just a lot of funny things have happened in September. Steve Miller fished in for Michael on the last night, and some of that jamming may have ended up on the new Supersession release.)

There should soon be a bunch of "Supersession" recordings from other parts with the success of the first one, including one probably on Atlantic featuring Stephen Stills perhaps accompanied by David Crosby, Graham Nash of the Hollies and maybe Eric Clapton.

As the group scene goes through all sorts of amoeba-like changes and record companies get less and less upright about "their" musicians recording with other groups, a lot of good session dates will be the result. In a small way, this has already been happening: Eric Clapton played on the Jackie Lomax single produced by George Harrison and released on Apple. Stevie Winwood, Jack Casady, Al Kooper, Buddy Miles and Chris Wood are all fea-

tured on the new Hendrix set. It's nothing new, but now that the practice is increasingly upfront, the recording-buying public should be in for some tasty stuff.

Editor Jann Wenner, back from a week in New York City, brings this short report (among many): "Saw the Turtles at the Scene, myself conspicuously making one. Like everything else in the music business, they have become hip; but the Turtles have made the change with consummate grace. They are not coming on with Nehru jackets, beads and other such bullshit. They have naturally evolved from what they were: the band that sang 'It Ain't Me Babe,' and more recently 'She'd Rather Be With Me.' They did their old hits, their more recent ones—all of them excellent rock and roll songs—and their current single, 'Ellinore,' which is superb in terms of lyrics, structure, melody, musicianship and performance. In their spoken introductions, they referred to the time when they were "rock and roll stars," and seemed to well understand that although they once had a brighter day, they were nonetheless musicians, the Turtles, and dug what they were doing. They laid down an excellent sound, tight, strong and rock and roll. I await their next album, *Battle Of The Bands*, with expectations. I hope that today's so-called hip audience will see that these cats are truly hip."

Anyone who doubts the authenticity of the Who, should perhaps have seen them perform in Boston, one of the last dates of their recent American tour. Apparently after the guitar smashing and general revelry had been carried off, Keith Moon was still going at it, throwing his drums into the audience and very seriously demolishing the whole kit. After he finished that, with his mates looking on rather apprehensively from the sidelines, he strode off stage and put his fist through a pane of glass.

Aretha Franklin has begun work on her next album, recording it at the Atlantic studios in New York City. Most of the cuts will be slow, easy-paced ballads from out of the blues past, maybe even a variation on a theme of Ray Charles. Mick Jagger sent a song to Jerry Wexler, Aretha's producer, for Aretha to record, titled "Sale of the Earth." Before this album is released, Atlantic will probably be putting out an "Aretha Live in Europe" package. It ought to be great. Meanwhile, it's interesting to note that Aretha's last LP has been falling down the charts considerably faster than her previous ones.

Joan Baez, in what is becoming a very tiresome trek, is going to Nashville to do her next album. Sessions are set for October 14th-20th. If you happen to be in Nashville with nothing else to do, by all means drop in and see what's happening. (Apparently unaware of her earlier recordings, Vanguard has announced that this will be "Miss Baez" first country music recording.) Did they ever hear, say, "Wildwood Flower"?

In the way of "last words," here is an incident recounted by Michael Zwerin in his column in the *Village Voice*. Zwerin is quoting Columbia Records producer Bob Johnston in a conversation with Al Kooper in Nashville.

"You know, Al" says Johnston, who produced the *Johnny Cash Live At Folsom Prison* album, "I got a letter on some official stationery signed by a woman, guess she was a secretary or somethin', askin' what word was beeped out on *Folsom Prison*. So ah wrote her back. Dear Miss so and so: The word beeped out on *Johnny Cash Live At Folsom Prison* is 'fuck.' Sincerely yours, Bob Johnston."



LINDA EASTMAN

Ray Charles in London

BY MAX JONES

LONDON—Ray Charles, singer and pianist among other things, and his team of 16 musicians, four Raelts, manager Joe Adams and sundry helpers, flew into London last Friday and went straight to the TV Center to record a double show for the BBC.

On Saturday and Sunday they gave concerts in London and Wolverhampton, then left early next day for Stockholm.

Charles himself received the customary acclaim on this short visit and his potent big band made a more favorable impression, I believe, than on any previous occasion.

I say 16 musicians because one of them, tenorman Buddy Terry, was missing. Some mystery surrounds his non-arrival. Bandsmen tell me they saw him at the airport just before departure. His luggage got to London but he didn't.

As a result, Britain's Pete King was sent for. He turned up too late for more than a few minutes' rehearsal but did an admirable job on the TV recording concerts.

Organist Preston, who once came to this country with Little Richard, takes the piano duties before Charles comes on, then moves to organ for his own spot and behind most of Ray's songs.

Does it mean that Charles no longer plays organ, I asked him between shows at the Royal Festival Hall.

"Well, Billy's so good on organ that I'd rather stay on piano and hear him play. I like to see young people come up, and Billy has so much soul, so much talent."

Charles has often said that he started out afraid of British audiences but has always found them enthusiastic. On Saturday, he was smiling happily after the first concert.

"Oh yes, I must tell you I was greatly thrilled once again. You hear so many people say to an artist: 'When you go to England they're goin' to kill you.' Yet they're so beautiful to me. I believe that when your audiences are chilly it's because someone is not sincere in what he's doing. If you're sincere they know it."

Recently, the Ray Charles Show

played the Coconut Grove, Los Angeles, the first time Charles has worked in a club there. The show averaged fourteen hundred cover charges (of five dollars) a day, never achieved before in the club's history.

What did he think about club work, and did he vary his approach for it?

"I was quite pleased with the Coconut Grove. We did great business there, which leaves everybody happy. But I like concerts a little better. You move around a bit more but you get to more people too, and I feel you can get greater variety into your show on concerts."

"No, I don't alter my approach because I'm in a club, or move whole programs around. I judge my approach by feeling out my audience. In other words, I've a different approach for different audiences, not places."

"I may change my program according to the people's reaction, but I don't vary it very much. If they don't respond to me at first, well, I stimulate them a little. Not too much, though. You keep that for the last number. That's the way I work."

"At the Coconut Grove . . . that was a good relationship. I think we may go back there next year, around June or July. I enjoyed it but you know, on club work, like TV work, you spend a lot of time doing nothing. And to me time is important. I don't know how much of it I have."

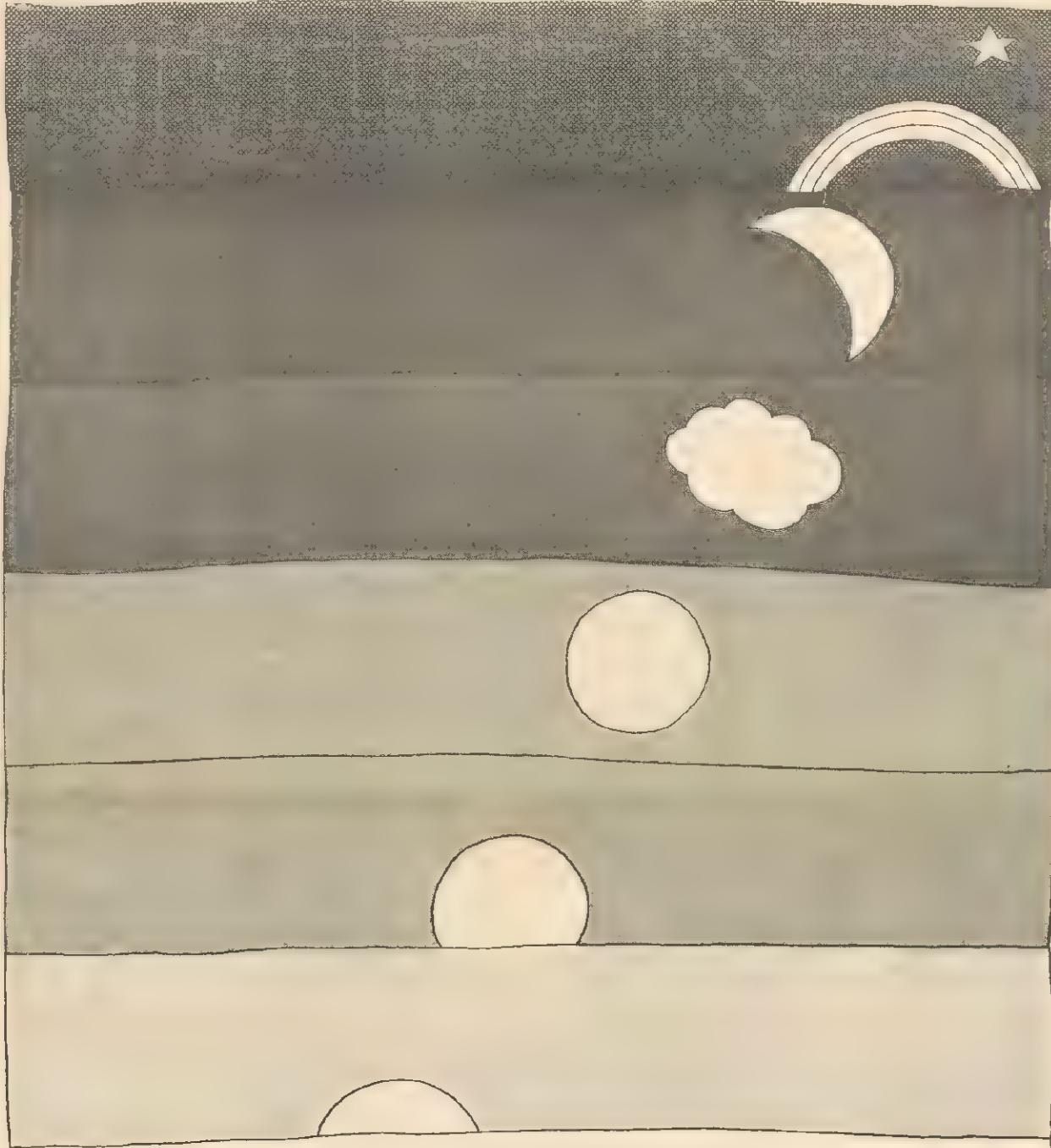
Charles has said before that he's not obsessed with making money, though he likes the stuff. But he holds traditional American views on the desirability of real estate.

In addition to his business interests—in a record company, music publisher's and agency—the singer owns an apartment block and land, as well as his home in Los Angeles.

"Well, I like to keep property," he told me. "It's safe, and a good investment. I have a piece of land around Apple Valley in California I bought 10 years ago. Now that land's worth, oh, three times what I paid for it."

Did these possessions increase his feeling of security, I wondered. "I don't know about security, maybe

—Continued on Page 30



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Los Angeles Near Clubless: Kaleidoscope Kollapses

LOS ANGELES — Another of this city's pop music halls, the Kaleidoscope, has collapsed and the building has been leased by Kragen-Smathers-Fritz Inc. for a West Coast showing of the Broadway musical *Hair*.

The Kaleidoscope halted operation as a music club when its managers, former William Morris agents John Hartmann and Skip Taylor, were unable to come up with enough money to insure a new lease. Previously, New York backers of the club had fired Hartmann and Taylor, who later barricaded themselves inside the building in what was a successful but temporary attempt to regain control. The club had been losing money from its inception.

The lease was then opened to bids and the managers of the Smothers Brothers—Ken Kragen and Ken Fritz—along with Tommy Smothers, won—renting the old Moulin Rouge for one year, with a five-year option.

The club will be completely revamped — the second such operation in less than a year — at a cost estimated at \$100,000, converting the dance hall into a 1,200-seat theater. *Hair* is scheduled to open Nov. 7.

The Kaleidoscope's disappearance from the L.A. scene, following the Cheetah's collapse less than a month earlier, leaves this city nearly club-less — with only the Whiskey-a-Go-Go, the Troubadour and a few smaller clubs still operating.

Bill Graham Forms Talent- Booking Firm: 'Millard Agency'

SAN FRANCISCO — Bill Graham, head of the Fillmore East and West dancehalls, has formed a talent booking company, to be called the Millard Agency. The company, with offices in New York and San Francisco, will represent groups and package entertainment troupes to play other cities.

The first acts handled by Millard are the Grateful Dead, the Loading Zone, It's a Beautiful Day, Santana Blues Band and Cold Blood. The British groups Traffic and Spooky Tooth will be handled by Graham's organization in their next US tour.

Graham serves as an advisor to the corporation. The first two executives are Paul Baratta, Graham's assistant at the Fillmore West, and Barry Imhoff, a former Greenwich Village Nightclub owner. The New York staff has yet to be named.

The entertainment packaging branch of the agency will aim, in Paul Baratta's words, at "presenting dances as they are run at the Fillmore, in towns outside New York and San Francisco." Head of the production company will be Chip Monck, who set up the physical arrangements for the Monterey Pop Festival.



CALIFORNIA IN GREAT BRITAIN

Continued from Page 1

the most striking London had seen.

Jim Morrison entered the Doors' reception at the Institute for Contemporary Arts' Cybernetics show tracked and followed by Granada Television's lights and cameras, Morrison looking paler and more abstract than the remote control robot walking jerkily around the reception floor. With all the photographers and reporters surrounding him Morrison must have lost his soul a thousand times—see photo.

(The cybernetics exhibition which features computer generated graphics, animated films, composed music and painting machines is like a wide-eyed children's playground and a fantastic place for a reception—unlike the Revolution—a club resembling the Copacabana where the Airplane walked around unnoticed during their reception.)

On the Doors' first visit to England Morrison avoided the press and generally built up the image of an inaccessible dark poet. His principal meeting with the press was at the shooting of a TV show. Morrison showed up for a minute or two to say, "London's a groovy scene," and then ducked out.

The Doors are not yet the superstars in England that they are in the U. S. They have yet to have a single in the Top Ten, for instance. The British musical press shows a mixed reaction to them, more than they might be expected to show toward an established group.

The opinions range from Chris Welch's "the worst group ever" in a Melody Maker article generally unfavorable to American groups, to Tony Wilson's "one of the most professional groups on the scene everywhere" in the same publication. Wilson also praised the Doors for their "underlying feel of calculation and projection." Other reporters were impressed by Morrison's assurance and coolness, and some even found him "a nice guy."

It's surprising to realize that the only West Coast groups that have previously performed in London are the Mothers, Captain Beefheart, the Byrds. (Canned Heat is now here, while Sly and the Family Stone were busted at the airport, and split for home.) And certain informed English intellectuals consider the Mothers and especially the Doors to be

"subversive pop groups."

According to Dave Laing, writing in the ICA newsletter, "The Mothers have already seemed to me to be the most subversive of pop groups, not so much because of the political resonance of many Zappa's songs, but because of the group's dismembering and reconstruction of the styles and methods of hit parade music." But it's possible that this quasi-Barthian analysis could be used to interpret Vanilla Fudge or even the Who. And if you followed the lower path of this kind of esthetic analysis, surveyed as social criticism, you might turn up seeing in Barbara Streisand's tempo inversions — fast becoming slow, and vice versa — a kind of subverting of the Broadway musical ideal.

As for the Doors, some excellent Granada Television people are filming the group for an hour-long program to be called *When the Mode of the Music Changes, the Walls of the City Will Shake*. The question is, will the doors open and walk out of the building as it collapses.

The Roundhouse concert got such advance coverage in the British press as: "The biggest freak-out since Babylon is likely to erupt at London's Roundhouse next weekend, if advance reports on the Doors and Jefferson Airplane are anything to go by." One reason was that this was to be one of the very few times the two groups appeared on the same stage.

The British audience by and large preferred the Airplane, according to Melody Maker's columnist The Raver. The Airplane's second and third albums were big hits in England, and Grace Slick figured in the Melody Maker's Pop Poll as sixth most popular girl singer, the first American in the list after Aretha Franklin.

Grace had been photographed for the newspapers, while she protected herself from the English fog and rain — and photographers — by burying her face in a thick fur collar. Interviews with Grace, focusing on her story from Great Society days and underground movies, graced the center-spread pages.

The Doors' performance at the Roundhouse featured Morrison's usual dramatic persona—heart beating drums with the hero waiting with aggressive silence for heckling to start before letting out his "butterfly scream." Now the English audi-

ence came to hear the Doors' music, so no one really fainted or screamed, and Morrison grew more peevish. Later he waited sulkingly for the lights to go out for "The End." And another time he stood at the edge of the stage, asked for a cigarette—did thousands rush forward? Five minutes later someone offered him a roll-up.

Morrison comes across obviously like James Dean and less obviously to an English audience—as the L.A. teen-bopper's alter ego. (The film *Wild in the Streets* is clearly based on the Morrison image—"We've Got the Numbers"; and this film is not only esthetically atrocious, tastelessly directed and acted as it is, but it's politically corrupt since it implies that, since the fascist kids eliminate the FBI, CIA, and Senator Ed Begley, there must, by contrast, be something deeply humane about the establishment forces.)

To see the Doors as a radical political influence seems to me misguided. According to Morrison, "The Unknown Soldier" is a love song. "The violence is just a metaphor," he's quoted as saying. "It's about sexual intercourse. The firing squad is just a metaphor for what's going on." Soldiers in Vietnam turn on and listen to the Doors records—what kind of politics is that? Are the Doors any more subversive than the Vietnam war?

While in England, Morrison explicitly distinguished the Doors from the underground music scene of which Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead are examples. "If the Underground is giving away money, not earning money," he said at the Institute of Contemporary Arts press conference, "then we are not Underground. I guess we qualify as businessmen."

If the Doors represent a subversive influence it must be more owing to the fact that the group identifies itself with a pulsulating population of sixteen-year-olds than to its awareness of "what's going on."

With the Stones at the doorstep, it takes a lot of cerebration to see the Doors—a less interesting musical group than, say, Traffic, though they still write nice songs like "Light My Fire" and "Love Street"—as more relevant than Dylan (A. Goldin in *New World Writing 3*) or more to the point than "Street Fighting Man."



There's no hole in my soul, only in my head and it's getting much better!

Barry Gibb



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BOOKS



The Beatles, The Authorized Biography, Hunter Davies. McGraw-Hill New York, 357 pp.

BY JANN WENNER

The Beatles are the most outstanding phenomena of the McLuhan age: they are the first citizens of the global village, known in every remote part of the world. If you were wandering around in Tibet with long hair, and some hermit crawled out of his cave for the first time in twenty years, he'd look up at your hair and say one word: "Beatle?"

With that in mind, considering the "authorized biography" of the Beatles, in fact, considering the whole question of the Beatles, is a little difficult. One of the main concerns, one to which the book addresses itself but fails to deal with satisfactorily, is where the public life of the Beatles leaves off and where their private lives begin. Indeed, there is a prior question: does the Beatle 'phenomenon' entitles them to private lives at all?

This biography implies a dual answer: on the one hand, the answer is no, because here is a biography, promising revealing fact after fact and insight after penetrating insight and on the other, this book does not deliver fact after fact, but rather deliberately glosses over some of the most fascinating aspects of the Beatles. Having gone this far, both the author and the Beatles are obligated to play the game through to the end. (As John says about accepting the MBE's, "Then it all just seemed part of the game we'd agreed to play.")

Yet with it, the book carries that incredible power of the Beatles. The attraction is hard to explain, yet can be illustrated by recalling that all Paul McCartney has to do is wink or wave, and he'll set the world smiling. It's a great power to have. Thus, no matter what the shortcomings of this book are as a piece of writing, as a biographical study, as a book about the Beatles — it is nonetheless a book to be read. Like everything about the Beatles, even the dumbest picture or even some one square inch of a sheet that came

from the same hotel that George stayed in a week before, to be devoured, dug, gawked and enjoyed. It is the Beatles, and whether they like it or not, they are a mirror of ourselves.

Rarely, for instance, do people sit down for a moment and think of the incredible weirdness of it: they are four cats from what would otherwise be a forgotten English port town, who live thousands of miles away from anybody, and yet for millions of people, they are intimate friends, every little broken hangnail a proper topic of conversation and concern. Where do they get off?

This biography is one place.

In general, the first half of the book is inordinately dull. Here are John, Paul, George and Ringo growing up. Mostly they are tales we already knew. Finally though, they are presented as "facts" and not "fax." What other stories and details are added (John for instance, was an aggressive, unhappy kid, a child haunted first by the desertion of his father, and then the death of his mother, and he shoplifted, beat up kids at school), are passably interesting for those interested in hangnails, but essentially make only one point: like everybody else, they were kids, did all the things kids did, were cruel like all other kids, were happy like all other kids.

Paul was "sexually precocious" and jealous of anyone who got close to John. Ringo spent most of his early years in the hospital; George looked like and for all intents and purposes was, a juvenile delinquent. They all were.

What strikes one as interesting and relevant is not mentioned here: one easily forgets it today, but rock and roll was a phenomenon of the lower classes. It was dirty, raunchy, unrefined, too physical and tasteless. It was totally déclassé. And the Beatles were totally déclassé. Things have changed. But not that much.

Rock and roll is still very much a dirty, raunchy, too physical and unrefined music. Those who approach it as something more delicate, artful or

fashionable do so at great risk and danger, because they probably miss it altogether. Rock and Roll is not polite. It is rude, and its about time pop critics got hip to that.

There are many incidents and places and attitudes that this biography recalls, most of them with a good lesson about what's happening today. For example, keeping in mind the current scene in San Francisco and the rock and roll record explosion all over the place, here is what Ringo recalls about the early days in Liverpool.

"There were so many groups in Liverpool at one time that we often used to play just for each other, sitting in on each other's sessions, or just listening. It was a community on its own, just made up of groups. All going to the same places, playing for each other. It was all nice. Then when the record companies came up and started signing groups, it wasn't so friendly. Some made it and others didn't."

Today it would be good for the record industry to keep that in mind. It's so easy to kill the goose that laid the golden egg.

I find the first part uninteresting, because it is the tale of young boys growing up in any town anywhere. I suppose that this is the necessary prerequisite in setting the mood required to sense the incredible development of whatever it is to be a BEATLE. But Davies does it with little art and less interest. The book in general is handled that way. It is neither Mark Schorer's exhaustive Sinclair Lewis biography nor is it Hotchner's affectionate reminiscence of Fitzgerald. In fact it has the faults of both without the strength of either.

But the book is worth considerable attention and discussion, because it is the first major literary work on rock and roll at the beginning of a publishing season which is going to be marked by the publishing industry's rush to get on the hip rock and roll bandwagon, with a dozens of anthologies, essays, collections and quickies commissioned, ready and planned for release. In fact, The

Beatles is accompanied in its release by a competitive quickie to cash in on the largesse of the public interest in a book on the Beatles. Although I have not read the "Real Story" written by Julian Fast, I understand from all those who have that it is little more than quickie rewrite of the Time Magazine clippings file.

I have serious reservations about what will come in the spate of rock and roll books. Several will no doubt be vastly welcome, some informative, some erudite and some long overdue, but unfortunately those in touch with the publishing industry are much too polite. These books will be handled and collected by those who do not understand that rock and roll is about fucking. And that has to be understood.

The Hunter Davies biography here, is an excellent start, because it is a good book. As a writer, he has handled his subject with good taste; as a biographer, he has been conscientiously accurate; as a friend, he has been severely loving. That is almost too tall an order to be expected from anyone who has chosen to do a book about such a delicate and intangible a subject as the Beatles. A writer must have sympathy and understanding, and Hunter Davies has shown that he has these.

The biography picks up interest as the boys begin to become Beatles, almost at the moment that John, Paul, George and who ever was with them at the time as drummer, decided that for their first professional gig they needed a new name and came up with the "Silver Beatles." They were hanging around Liverpool, for the first time seeing the bizarre variations they were about to create in term of fan affection, go to Hamburg, meet Astrid Kirchner, the girl who first persuaded Stu Sutcliffe (the very first and most authentic of a line of dozens known as "the fifth beatle") to comb his hair in the style that soon to be known not by its first *nom de coiffure* "French style," but as "beatle hair."

Continued on next page

("Arthur," one of them called his hair style in *A Hard Day's Night*.) And Astrid also put them in black leather — a sign of bohemian style, instead of the affected Presley cowboy style, so foreign to Britain. Astrid first showed them their beauty; photographed them, dressed and loved them.

It was there that they apparently had their first experience with drugs; pep pills, dextroamphetamine, speed. Davies is quite explicit about the point, although I think he errs in trying to justify it as simply a hard-working man's prerogative and deny the inevitable discovery of being high and digging it.

Anyway, they get back to Liverpool, and then back to Hamburg. Then a kid comes in and asks record clerk Brian Epstein if he has any records by a new group called the Beatles . . . etc., etc., changes, well known anecdotes (and little new at all, apparently a monument to the thoroughness of the Beatlemania fondness for "fax," not Davies inability to search).

The first questions I begin to ask about the "public nature" (almost *res publica*, really) of the Beatles and this "authorized biography" with the events surrounding the replacement of Pete Best on drums with Ringo Starr (who emerges as a totally charming and kind person in this book.) And thus, also, enters Brian Epstein, that fabled man of mystery "behind" the Beatles. The man whom everyone had a sneaking feeling wasn't really happy, a man who showed an unhappy path of childhood, and who died of a perhaps not accidental overdose of the drugs of unhappiness and unfulfillment: alcohol, tranquilizers and barbituates. And all this on the weekend of the Massai.

(Incidentally that time jump scans the period between *Rubber Soul* and *Sgt. Pepper's*, and the bizarre scenes of our time which developed as the Beatles went on their round the world tours.)

These incidents—the Beatles' relationship to Brian Epstein, which includes the matter of Pete Best—raise a central question that this book presents implicitly, and a question about the whole spiritual and social implications of "The Beatles."

There is obviously something missing in the Pete Best incident and a great deal not said about Brian Epstein, that is well known to friends of the Beatles, but is deliberately not told in the book.

The Beatles phenomenon has required the nearly complete sacrifice of the individual personas of George, Ringo, Paul and John. The world at large is privy to nearly every last moment of a Beatle's life. Is this really requisite of what went down? Or was it just an aberration of an hysteria taken to its wildest extreme?

Must it continue (as this biography by its existence implies it must) or are the boys, despite their continuing public and musical activity, finally entitled to a little respite from the most incredible invasion of privacy since God was watching Adam and Eve (the latter being the world's first act of sexual intercourse, and the former's (the Beatles) being—a billion years later, two hundred billion people on the earth, and in the age of McLuhan—the world's penultimate act of sexual intercourse.)

Man's circumstances have certainly changed. It is almost as if mankind, with its war in Vietnam and hydrogen bombs is about to sow the last seed of destruction, his final reward for that first sin.

The questions this book has to reckon with are almost anthropomorphically mythic in their nature.

Anyway, a lot hasn't been told, and it is apparently a matter of privacy (much like taking LSD, or views on religion) which would, upon its official revelation, put John, Paul, Ringo through that whole "global controversy" scene that arises on their public indiscretions, all over again.

By not bringing these matters forward, matters which have as much general relevance to the meaning and understanding of rock and roll as they have to John or Paul as private human beings, we are left hanging not knowing which answer has been selected as the "right" one.

On the one hand this book says that the *res publica* aspect of the Beatles is essential (by the postulation of the necessity for such a work in the first place) and on the other hand, by disregarding certain significant, albeit controversial, aspects



of the Beatles, says "no, complete public knowledge (almost in a confessional fashion) is not essential." The question is left completely unresolved, and it is a nearly insoluble one to all those involved with the Beatles, and by that one can understand some several million people.

And this is precisely why this book is so important. Because understanding the Beatles—or Bob Dylan or the Stones—is more important to understanding rock and roll than any other book, anthology writer or critic, could ever come close to explaining.

The question just sits there. Before getting on to the best parts of the biography, those about the Beatles today, one should consider three other "departments" in this book: the photos, the finances and recordings. The summary of the Beatles' records is totally inadequate and uninteresting, being merely a list. The estimate of the Beatles' financial activities is plumb where something solid and definite was required. The photos are interesting—an unfortunately small selection for a phenomenon

so dependent on the visual aspects—especially the beautiful and sensitive portraits of the four Beatles and lady companions photographed by Ringo Starr, again a tribute to his warmth and understanding. ("I learned gentleness from Harry," Ringo is quoted by Davies about his stepfather. "There's never any need for violence.") They are very haunting pictures, very revealing, and in the case of the portrait of John and Cynthia Lennon, particularly poignant and, like a Paul McCartney love song, sadly beautiful.

The two years of the Beatles' lives dominated by touring are treated fairly quickly, and wisely so, as the scenes and anecdotes are particularly well known.

George recalls it this way:

"It was like the end of a cycle. In Hamburg we had played for up to eight hours at a stretch, loving it all, getting to know each other and what we could do. It was a real freak-out in those days; the things we did were really wild."

"Back in Liverpool we were doing shorter hours, but it was still as en-



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age song is gestated and recorded—preferring to concentrate on the Beatles as people more than as artists. Davies does this by acknowledging the vast body of writing on subject, accurately noting that most of it is irrelevant and worthless.

By way of assessment, it is a fact of the known world that the impact and influence of the Beatles has been absolutely universal. And that is just one aspect of it; what of the work itself? From the beginning, the Beatles were revolutionary in terms of the impact of their lyrics, song writing, performance, the synthesis of their style, and in recording ability. Their musical ability and acumen was apparent long before anyone discovered that Paul McCartney frequently used dominant 12ths after I-IV-V progression in a minor key.

They are not the only good songwriters and musicians around, there are a lot of others, some of them better than the Beatles. It has just been that the Beatles have been totally consistent and "getting better" where many others have not, and thus their influence on nearly everyone in the field has been enormous. This tied in with the global impact of "The Beatles" in conjunction with a style of life and thought, not unique to John or Paul or George or Ringo but unique in their position, has overlown the matter immensely.

This book becomes truly fascinating in that old Beatle way when it gets to the Beatles today, their lives and views. Davies has faithfully reported these, on all levels. On one level, we find out where and how the Beatles live, in what kind of houses, decorated how, how they are used, how much they cost (and this all includes the same details for their parents, hitherto undisclosed), and when they are lived in.

John Lennon doesn't drink; accountants pay the bills, they spend \$400 a month on food and get £50 a week allowance from their accountants, in five pound notes. All of this comes down to an interesting, and pertinent detail: the Beatles, like the Queen, do not carry around money personally. The detail is often incredibly pedantic. "Cyn was making the evening meal. It was served at six-thirty. They started with a

slice of melon followed by a plate of cold meat with mashed potatoes and cauliflower, John didn't have meat. He'd decided to be a vegetarian. They all drank cold milk with it."

Davies shows what the Beatles do with their days and hours, when they see each other, how, why and where. Paul's house on Cavendish Avenue, John's (until recently) small mansion in Weybridge with its living room, garden and where the stash is kept.

One cannot fault Davies for reporting on the food; he reports on much deeper matters with as much accuracy. About the four of them, Paul says this:

"The thing is, we're all really the same person. We're just four parts of the one. We're individuals, but we make up together. The Beatles, which is one person. If one of us, one side of The Beatles, leans over one way, we all go with him or we pull him back. We all add something different to the whole."

And Pattie Harrison says this:

"I know now that they are all together. I didn't realize it when I was first married. They all belong to each other. . . . George has a lot with the others that I can never know about. Nobody, not even the wives, can break through it or even comprehend it."

John is quoted thusly:

"We do need each other a lot. When we used to meet again after an interval, we always used to be embarrassed about touching each other. We'd do an elaborate handshake just to hide embarrassment. Or we did mad dances. Then we got to hugging each other." And he also says:

"We talk in code to each other as Beatles. We always did that, when we had so many strangers 'round us on tours. We never really communicated with other people. Now that we don't meet strangers at all, there is no need for any communication. We understand each other. It doesn't matter about the rest."

We find out what their lives are like today, because it is an essential part of understanding where they are today. And this is the beauty of this book: it recalls that phenomenal curiosity, call it being a "fan" —cause I sure am—that has

characterized this era's relationship to the Beatles (and that is one of them important questions overlooked).

The tearing, raging sexuality of the Beatlemania days fans was always so strange to behold. But it was real because those girls were the first to know that the Beatles were "The Beatles." The book bears witness: the very first time the boys began wondering about what was happening was upon returning to Liverpool from Hamburg, they started noticing this phenomenon in the young girl fans.

"The men don't know what the little girls understand," said Willie Dixon.

The girls saw the Beatles were for real. And driven by the mania of that understanding, they clutched and clawed because the Beatles were the source of energy. And that source attracts everyone.

During the past five years, "The Beatles" have been an influential part of everyone's lives. It has been incredible. Think of all the changes in the world that have occurred in the last five years, and so many of them, especially for the young of my age, are attributable directly to the Beatles. They have become the focus of the world's attention more than any other single event, of recent history since World War II.

John Lennon in particular thinks about this question. And this is a question this biography fails to address itself too. A vital once, but left out nonetheless (because this book is more of an extensive newspaper report than it is a self-contained biography). Here are some of John's thoughts on the matter:

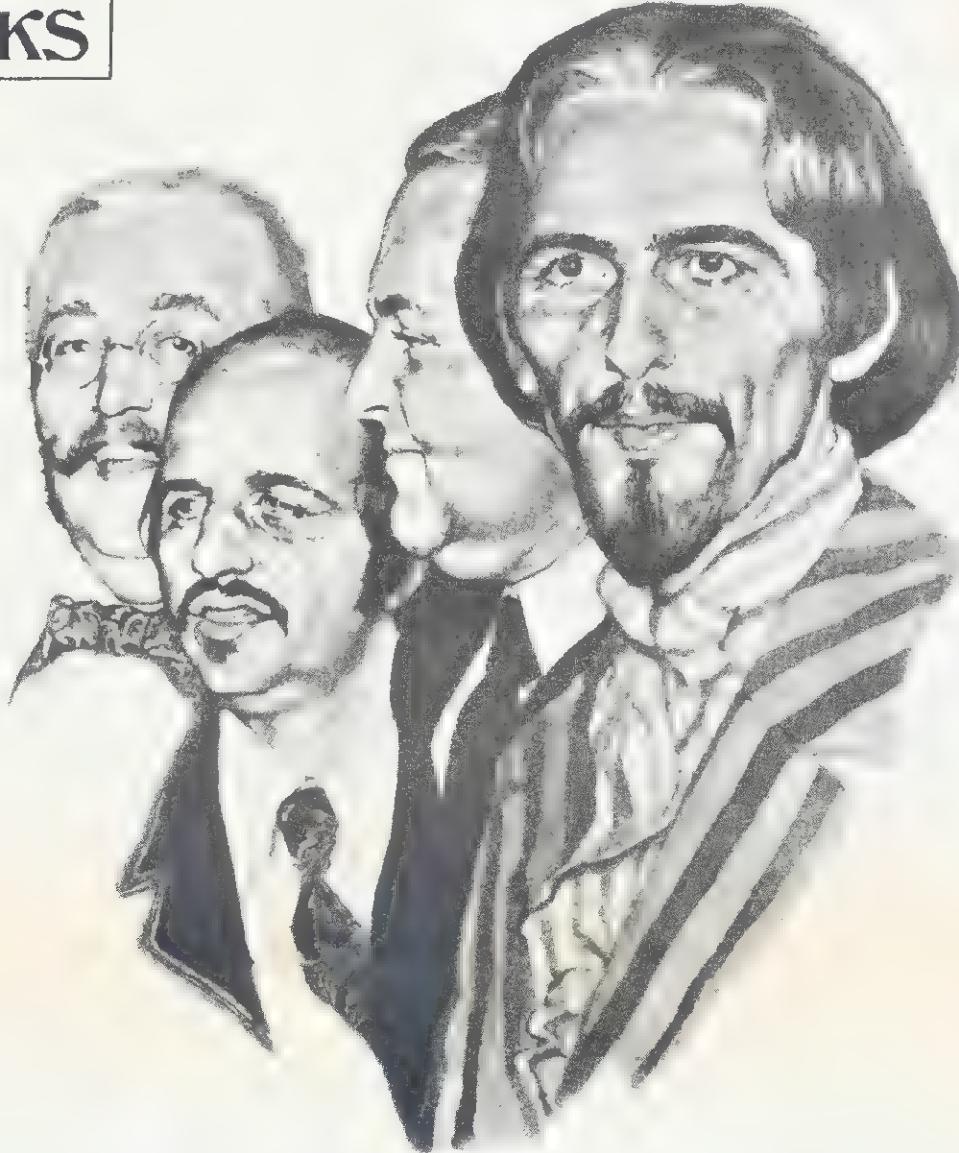
"I never felt any responsibility, being a so-called idol. It's wrong of people to expect it."

But this is precisely what the "press" has come to expect, and in a large way, this media conception has distorted the picture of being a Beatleperson.

"What they are doing is putting their responsibilities on us, as Paul said to the newspapers when he admitted taking LSD. If they were worried about him being responsible, they should have been responsible enough and not printed it, if they were genuinely worried about people copying."



BOOKS



—Continued from Preceding Page
That is how corrupt the press, magazines, newspapers, television and media in general has become. And everyone suspects it. The Beatles know it, and thus are contemptuous of the press and not piously grateful. This contempt spills over to the pop critics and reviewers. And this has been deserved. So much ineptness, it's incredible.

John says, about his music and its reviewers, "I don't think our old songs are all that different from our new ones, as people are saying. The words are different, but that's because they're done up differently. The tunes are much the same."

"I suppose I'm as indifferent about our music because other people take it so seriously. It can be pleasing in a way, but most of it gets my back up."

In considering the Beatles, or this book, we are actually considering several much bigger things: we are, of course, considering the Beatles as individuals; we are considering their impact on the world; we are considering the whole question of "rock and roll"; we are considering the world we live in and we are considering ourselves.

The "Beatle phenomenon" is of the first importance in understanding these matters. Not that the Beatles themselves created it (they just "did" it). But for better or for worse, they are the symbol of it. Thus, the Beatles are *res publica*. And this aspect of it is for them an unwanted and unmasked public sacrifice. For the public, it has become a ritual and for the *phenomenon*, the general public must know every-

thing there is to know about them.

For the past five years, the Beatles have been held up as a mirror. In part this accounts for the term "the boys"; like everyone else, they are young. Their lives are so devoured, because we are in the desperate search for data about ourselves. And like Narcissus, who fell in love with his own image reflected in the lake, there is a certain amount of edification involved and it is revealing if nothing else, but there is also a great danger about it. With this biography perhaps everyone ought to get off their haunches, get their face out of the lake and attend to real, not reflected, problems. And John, Paul, George and Ringo can get on with making some more music.

People used to ask "What will happen when the bubble bursts?"

Now, they ask—and especially Bob Dylan is asked—"What does it mean?"

"People want to know what the inner meaning of 'Mr. Kite' was," says John. "There wasn't any. I just did it. I shoved a lot of words together then shoved some noise on. I just did it. I didn't dig that song when I wrote it. I didn't believe in it when I was doing it. But no body will believe it. They don't want to. They want it to be important. People think the Beatles know what's going on. We don't. We're just doing it." (Italics mine.)

Throughout the history of the Beatles, people have either been asking "what does it mean?" or else they have been digging it. Part of digging it is understanding it. You can't be told: Either you "believe

in the magic of rock and roll" or you don't.

Throughout this review, we have been—not saying what it means—we have been giving out some questions to ask if you want to find out. Like Bob Dylan once described himself, they are also song-and-dance men. "No, but I can't retire," Lennon is quoted as saying, "I've got these bloody songs to write."

They are John, Paul, George and Ringo. They make music. Here's what John says:

"It's nice when people like it, but when they start 'appreciating' it, getting great deep things out of it, making a thing of it, then it's a lot of shit. It proves what we've always thought about most sorts of so-called art. It's all a lot of shit. We hated all the shit they wrote and talked about Beethoven and ballet, all kidding themselves it was important. Now it's happening to us. None of it is important. It just takes a few people to get going, and they con themselves into thinking it's important. It all becomes a big con."

I have come to be passionately angry at the people who have got going and have put so much fire between us and the Beatles. Thankfully, Hunter Davies has not done that here. Although he is to be rightly faulted for a number of failings within the context of the "art of autobiography" ("so-called art," John says above, "It's all a lot of shit"), he has handled his subject as appropriately as it is to be handled, with respect, affection, understanding, somewhat in awe, but nonetheless catching the idea that life is to be enjoyed.

"We're a con as well," Lennon continues, "We know we're conning them, because we know people want to be conned. They've given us the freedom to con them. Let's stick that in there, we say, that'll start them puzzling. I'm sure all the artists do, when they realize it's a con. I bet Picasso sticks things in. I bet he's been laughing his balls off for the last eighty years."

That's as good an answer as any.



THE ROLLING STONE INTERVIEW: CASS ELLIOT



14). She was picking and
piling from among the
Mamas and Papas, that she built her
public reputation; in three years, she
was the unchallenged queen of
the music scene. During the
years that followed, she
was the most popular singer in
the country, and her
success was due to her
natural gift for the art, and
her ability to sing in
any language.

JOURNAL OF CLIMATE



Are you pleased with your album?

Well, David Crosby said about a dozen times it took him further than he'd meant to go, which I thought was such a groovy compliment. It's me. It's where I'm at. Some friends came in—Graham Nash of the Hollies, John Sebastian—and they said, "I'm gonna have to tell you, if it's bad, I'm gonna have to tell you, because I really love you and I wouldn't want you to put something out that you're gonna be ashamed of." I said, "If it isn't great, it's because I'm not great then. Whatever it is, it's where I'm at right now." I think it's more important what other people think of it.

I guess it's a lot lower key than a lot of screaming and yelling I did with the Mamas and Papas. It's not nearly as intense vocally. I think it's intense emotionally.

The last Mamas and Papas album was lower key than what had preceded it...

I didn't quite understand that last album. I thought it was overdone. My role in the Mamas and Papas was basically just to sing. John (Phillips) did all the arranging and although there were a lot of things I didn't really understand, we did them. I will admit in all honesty there are a very few songs on all the Mamas and Papas albums that I'm really proud to listen to. I don't have the records in my house. Not because I'm a snob. I just don't feel like listening to them. If somebody comes over and says, "Will you play that for me?" what I do is run over to the record player and play "Shake It Up, Baby" or something, because it offends me. But I don't think I'll take my new album off. It's the first thing I've ever done I can listen to objectively. I can listen to the vocals and the orchestra and everything and not be chained just to my own voice in a playback.

Who produced your new album?

I had a great producer, John Simon. I just stumbled on him by luck. I didn't know anything about him. He had a great sense of humor. As a matter of fact, I thought he was silly and I thought here's somebody I can really work with because I'm basically the silliest person I know. A friend of mine, Alan Pariser, brought him over for dinner. Alan had played me *Music From The Big Pink*. I guess I was too out of it to listen to it because it didn't make any impression on me whatsoever the first time I heard it. Then I met Simon. I had been looking for six months for the right producer. Because I knew I wasn't capable of doing it myself; I didn't have the objectivity. I didn't want to hire a staff of people: "Okay, you write the strings, and you write the horns, and you write the arrangements, and you play the guitar." I wanted one person that I could work with and really communicate with, who could understand me and my music and what I wanted to say. So when he came over the the house the next time, I said, "Hey, are you busy?" He said, "No, I'm sort of busy." He was doing the Electric Flag at the time, and Janis Joplin and whatever else, a movie, but he said, "I've got time." We sort of separated for a few days

and thought it over. I went out and got all the albums he'd ever produced—Leonard Cohen, Simon and Garfunkel—and just listened. I said, "Yeah, he's definitely the right person." I called him and for about three weeks we hung out and talked, swam in my pool and played with my baby. Then we started to put material together.

What did you have in mind?

I had a concept for the album. I wanted to do songs that had been written by people I knew, but had never been able to sing because John wrote most of the Mamas and Papas material. People like David Crosby, Graham Nash, John Sebastian. I thought I'd call the album "In the Words of My Friends" but we found we needed broader material. As it is, I've got a song of Sebastian's, two songs of John Simon's, one song of Graham Nash, a song my sister wrote, a song John Hartford wrote, a Leonard Cohen song, and Cyrus Faryar wrote two songs. So it did turn out to be the words of my friends.

Which Mamas and Papas songs do you like?

"No Salt on Her Tail," "Look Through My Window," "Monday, Monday," "Go Where You Want to Go," "Got a Feeling." Notice I haven't mentioned any songs from the last album. I wonder what that is. Maybe because that album was such an arduous task. We spent one whole month on one song, just the vocals for "The Love of My" took one whole month! I did my album in three weeks, a total of ten days in the studio. Live with the band, not pre-recorded tracks sitting there with earphones. What a thrill, what a fantastic voyage—as they say in movieland.

What was it that led you to go out as a single? Did you feel the group had run its course as far as you were concerned?

Well, having the baby changed my life a lot. I don't want to go on the road, you see. It's actually a matter of economics, much like the Vietnamese war, I guess. I didn't want to go on the road and I wanted to stay home with my baby. I guess I could go to Kansas and be a waitress and support my kid that way. But I'd rather live comfortable and I wanted to do more creative work. I didn't just want to be part of a group. I wanted to be able to do television, and a movie if it came up, to sort of

diversify myself, to extend myself. Within the framework of a group, that freedom is not possible.

We had sort of an unwritten agreement—us all being friends and through all those changes and all—that whenever anybody wanted to quit, they could just quit. So I went to John and said, "Look, it's been two and a half years and I'm really tired and I want to do some stuff on my own." He said, "Well, perhaps it wouldn't be proper for you to do that as a member of the group, so if you want to leave, we'll understand."

So then we tried to recapture ourselves on this album. I don't know whether we successfully made it. I know it hasn't sold as well. And I can't help but feel it has a lot to do with the vibrations, vibrations that the music produced—not being as electric and exuberant as we once were.

How does Lou Adler figure in not figuring as producer of your album—or is that a touchy subject?

Oh, it's touchy as hell. I'll say it like it is. I think Lou felt that if he produced my record it would intensify the alienation of the group. He didn't want to be responsible for alienating the group from itself. So he respectfully declined my offer. I waited for months for him to make up his mind.

I didn't feel that I wanted John to produce my album. I wanted it to be Lou or somebody else. This is conjecture on my part, but I think that John felt he wanted to produce it. I just felt for some reason that as soon as I got out of the group, I wanted to be free of every entanglement, creatively.

Do you think a group like the Mamas and Papas would make it today as completely as, say, two or three years ago?

I think the unique thing about music and graphic art is, as opposed to, say, acting and directing, that if you are good you can always create a place for yourself. In acting, for instance, there's only a certain amount of good parts you have to find the right vehicle. But if you're making good music, man, there's so much room I think that any group that's really good can make it, any time. That was my feeling behind the Mamas and Papas. When I heard us sing together the first time, we knew, we KNEW . . . this is it. This was when we first came to California, after we'd left the islands.

Is that a true story about a pipe falling on your head?

It's true. I did get hit on the head by a pipe that fell down and my range was increased by three notes. They were tearing this club apart in the islands, revamping it, putting in a dance floor. Workmen dropped a thin metal plumbing pipe and it hit me on the head and knocked me to the ground. I had a concussion and went to the hospital. I had a bad headache for about two weeks and all of a sudden I was singing higher. It's true. Honest to god.

Do you think the Mamas and Papas might some day re-emerge?

Before I made my album I really believed we'd all get back together some day and do another album. Now I don't know. There's something about being a part of a group. You can call it a symbiotic relationship or anything you want—that is unique from doing it yourself. But I would love, in all honesty, to do another album with the Mamas and Papas sometime. I miss them.

We're still friends and we want to be friends. Because to break up a successful group, which is really what I did, you know, there's some kind of karma here. I don't feel guilty about it; I left the group because I had to. That was being honest. My mother always told me that if you tell lies, you get in trouble, and if you don't tell lies, you never get in trouble. Maybe there is some bitterness, but they're not showing it to me, and I'm not showing it to them. It's been very gentle.

Did you use backup voices in your album?

On two songs. I sang with the Blossoms and Brenda Holloway. We did some gospel things. Couple of songs I sang with myself. But basically, they're all solo vocals. Not double-track, no over-dub, just flat. Me.

Who were the musicians you used?

Ooh, boy. John Simon played piano, Harvey Brooks from the Electric Flag played bass. Paul Harris played piano, too, and organ. James Burton, one of the great guitar players of all time—he played all the Elvis Presley and Ricky Nelson dates—played dobro. Stephen Stills, Cyrus Faryar, Jimmy Gordon on drums. Pias Johnson on sax. This crazy kid named Dino, this crazy Cuban. San Francisco, played conga. And Phil Austin of the Firesign Theatre did some tremendous, funny vocal over-dubs. It was a joyful little crew.

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Who's working with you on the Vegas act?

Mason Williams is gonna write it. Harvey Brooks is putting a band together. What we're gonna do is . . . I believe that if you truly dig what you are doing, if you lay it out that way, nobody can not respond. I think my plans are to just build up, not relent for a moment. That's what rock and roll is. Rock and roll is relentless. That's what I want to do in Vegas—not let up. Really pour it on. Have a band. Bring music and entertainment and relaxation and highness and everything else to Vegas. I don't think it's ever been done there.

Have you ever been to Vegas?

Well, Harry Belafonte was opening there that night and his opening number was "Rock Island Line." I sat there and I thought: He's great, but it's gotta be 25 years behind what's happening. I'm gonna float my band above the stage on an inflatable, helium-filled set. When the curtains open, I want them to go "WHAT???"

I met the bosses of the hotel. They're paying me an outrageous sum of money: \$40,000 a week, which is totally silly. If Emmett Grogan ever heard about it, I'd really be in deep trouble. Anyway, I caught these owners looking at me as if they were saying: "What the hell is she gonna do?" And I thought to myself: "You just wait . . . you have no idea . . . I'm gonna blow your brains out."

I'm trying to get Mike Bloomfield to play guitar for me. I would just dig to have Michael there. I love Michael. You know, I sang on their record. That's never really been formally declared. I did the background voicing with Buddy Miles on "Groovin' Is Easy." Somebody from San Francisco came down and said, "Hey, have you heard the Electric Flag?" I said no, and they said come to the studio at 10 o'clock in the morning. I said, "You're crazy; nobody gets me into a studio at 10 o'clock on a Saturday morning, when I just left another studio at three." But I went, and got so flipped out by the Electric Flag! It's too bad their first album was recorded so badly—no presence at all. It's really too bad,

because they were just the greatest group this country has ever seen. Now we've got "Big Pink," and that's a different bag. The Flag was the first big band rock sound. So I sang with them, although I never admitted it before.

I felt it lost an important element—a vital element—when Michael left. I dig Jimi Hendrix and think he's an outsize guitar player. But Michael is intellectual and being white, I respond intellectually. He grabs me. He's a musician and a technician and intelligent. I think he's probably the finest guitar player we have.

You put music on at least two levels then . . . one being intellectual, or intellectual as opposed to something else?

No, I don't put it on levels. I listen to it. If I like it, then later I analyze why I like it. First has to come the initial liking. I can't say, really. Like, today, I'd rather hear Jimi Hendrix. Today. The Doors, for instance: I can't really get into their music. I find it very one-dimensional. True, it's far out. But when you get there finally, it's just in one. It doesn't surround me or take me away, whereas the Beatles always have completely turned me on. With Michael it's the same thing. His music is intellectual and being white, like I say, I respond to that side of his music also, in addition to his musical ability and technical knowledge. I respond also to his intellectualism as he approaches his guitar. It's not "as opposed to," but in addition to. Michael can play the blues. So can Eric Clapton and so can Jimi Hendrix. But when Michael plays, he takes me very far. He backs me a little bit more, whereas Jimi Hendrix is right in there, solid, guttural, right there! I think Michael's approach is more intellectual.

Are there records you listen to more than others?

I listen to "Big Pink" voraciously. It's happy music. I listen to Dr. John the Night Tripper. I listen to the Cream, Jimi Hendrix. I listen to Dylan's last album a lot. I never really understood him before. I listened to the new groups much. I don't listen to Janis Joplin and I don't listen to Country Joe and the Fish or Steppenwolf, or any of the groups that are making a lot of noise now. I haven't been able to get into their music. I listen to music I understand. That's why I made the comment about Dylan. The last album, *John Wesley Harding*, turned me on. I loved it and I understood it.

As a solo artist, how are you being billed?

I hope the marquee (in Vegas) just says Cass Elliot. I'm afraid it might say Mama Cass Elliot. It's a stigma I might not be able to drop right away. I fought it all my folksinging life. Before I was even with the Mamas and Papas. I hated it. Everybody'd say, "Hey, mama, what's happening?" Then came the Mamas and Papas and I was stuck with it. And now people call me Mama Cass because of the baby. So I don't know whether I'm gonna be able to really get away from it.

The baby goes with me, by the way. It's in my contract. You do two shows a day seven days a week, so it's like 48 shows straight and I'd never have time to visit her otherwise. She's just at the ripe age, 16 months. She plays harmonica and she's very rhythmic; she dances all the time. An hour a day I put her on my lap and she plays organ. When I was pregnant with her and we were recording the "Deliver" album, I used to put the earphones on my stomach. After she was born and we went to Europe, I left her at my mother's house for a couple of weeks. My mother told me when I got back that when the baby was unhappy, she'd put on that album and it would soothe her right away. The baby seemed to be familiar with all the songs. It was very relaxing to her. So . . . that's my comment on pre-natal influence.

What is your day like, when you aren't working?

Most of the time I'm at home. I hardly ever go out. I get up early in the day with the baby and my day is her day. At 7:30 I watch the Huntley-Brinkley report, watch a little television, and go to sleep. I'm a

member of the Factory; somebody gave me a membership. So occasionally I say to someone, "Hey, you wanna see something?" and we go to the Factory and sit and laugh. I don't drink, so I'm not one of those people who go from bar to bar.

But you are known as "The Queen of Los Angeles Pop Society."

Who else is there? Gracie Slick lives in San Francisco. I guess it's because I know all the people. We've all been friends for many, many years, and we've maintained our relationships. So if you come over to my house and you see Eric Clapton and David Crosby and Steve Stills playing guitar together and Buddy Miles walks in, it's not because I got out my Local 47 book and called up and said let's get a bunch of musicians together. My house is a very free house. It's not a crash pad and people don't come without calling. But on an afternoon, especially on weekends, I always get a lot of deli-reessen food in, because I know David is going to come over for a swim and things are going to happen. Music happens in my house and that pleases me. Joni Mitchell has written many songs sitting in my living room. Christmas day when we were all having dinner, she was writing songs. It's a joy for me to have music in my house. It can't hurt my kid any, either.

At the same time, you are, or have been, very much a part of the public scene, as when you helped open the Kaleidoscope. What is your reaction to that level of what's going to today?

I think it's silly. Somebody called me up and said, "You wanna come and cut a tape" and I said, "Why not?" So I called my friends, none of whom are in pop music, and said, "Hey, you wanna go on a trip? Let's go down to the Kaleidoscope and I'll show you something." It's silly. I mean, who am I? What possible value can it have? I mean, if somebody calls you up on the phone five, six, ten times to get you to do something, why not do it? I go sometimes just because I just want to see things. I went to the premiere of *Alice B. Toklas* because I knew if I didn't go then, I probably wouldn't have stood in line to go to the movie. It's hard to move around in public. Go ahead . . . ask me what I hate most about my fame . . . go ahead: What do you hate most about your fame, Cass? Say it.

What do you hate most about your fame, Cass?

Everything I've learned in life I've learned either by doing it or watching the changes other people go through. And when you're famous, you don't get to meet people—because they want you to like them and they present themselves to you, present the best sides of themselves, and you don't see the real people. Which is why I don't really go anywhere. And when I do, I put on my silly face and do what they expect me to do. Actually, I never do what they expect me to do. It's the only way I could go on doing what I have to do. I do whatever I . . . you know. I didn't even comb my hair today. I didn't know we were taking pictures, but when I found out, it didn't change my mind any. Interview verite.

There's a song in my album called "The California Earthquake" and the opening line is: "I heard they exploded the underground blast/What they say is gonna happen is gonna happen at last/That's the way it appears/They tell me the fault line runs right through here/So that may be, that may be/What's gonna happen is gonna happen to me/That's the way it appears." That's where it's at. My sister is a part-time clairvoyant. She says, "Get the baby out of here; move to Kansas." I say, "Look, I'm here now. There must be a reason I'm here." If that's fatalistic, be that as it may. Where my world is, is where my life is, and if we're falling into the ocean, we're falling into the ocean. The second verse says: "Atlantis will rise/Sunset Boulevard will fall . . ." And what could be more timely than that? It's where it's at.

David Crosby's boat is anchored about sixty miles from where this temple is supposed to have risen in the Atlantic. This was reported in



the New York Times. Brandon De-Wilde's wife Susan called the New York Times to verify it, and they did. Apparently a temple has been spotted protruding two feet above the surface of the sea in very well-sailed waters, near Bimini off the coast of Florida. And it's supposedly Atlantis. So I said to David, "Let's go, man; let's go see." Because I pride myself on being an old soul and I would say that I'd know if it's Atlantis. Maybe it's not Atlantis. Maybe it's Miami Beach. But let's go see anyway.

You've mentioned astrology, and now Atlantis . . . and Dunhill used a horoscope as a biography for you.

And as I recall, one of the Mamas and Papas albums included an astrological breakdown of the group. Is this general area important to you?

Well, I would say that there are certain glittering generalities that can be made about every sign that will hold true about everybody who's a member of that sign. For instance, if you had been a Virgo, you would have understood how I hate to be late. I broke up a group I was in once called the Big Three because one of the guys was chronically late and I couldn't take it. I feel when you're supposed to be somewhere on time, you're there on time. You don't hang people up. It doesn't matter if you're the President of the United States. That's not what you are here for, to hang people up. When I know somebody's sign, and I usually know somebody's sign whether they tell me or not—after getting into this for several years—it helps me to deal with them. Usually I'd rather let people deal with me. That's a total ego hangup, but that's where it's at.

This interest does go back several years, then?

Yeah, I'd say a couple of thousand. Like I said, I think I would recognize Atlantis. I wouldn't be pretentious enough to try to explain that, though, because there are people who would be offended by it. I think I would be offended by it if somebody said, "Why, I'll know Atlantis if I see it." But inside myself I know that, karmically, I would know it if it were Atlantis. I've had quite a few experiences like that. I'll tell you of one. I've always wanted to go to



BARON WOLMAN

England; I've always felt a tremendous drawing to England—especially the Elizabethan period. I felt I was familiar with a lot of it—more than what I was familiar with from what I read and studied in school. I went to England. I started driving. I drove to Stonehenge and found that I had been there. It was familiar to me. I went to the Tower of London and knew that I had been there. It was more than just feeling vibrations, which a lot of people can do—feel, you know, vibrations of a place that has antiquity screaming through it. It was an irrefutable fact. It was like coming home for me.

Reincarnation isn't such a far-out theory, after all. I had a medium who did a karmic reading of my soul. She went into a trance and spoke to me in a completely different voice from her own. I'm a die-hard sceptic, but she told me that Owen, my daughter, had been my child before and that her soul had been returned to me. I thought that was a lovely thought, even if it's not true. And even her name, Owen, which is a peculiar name to name a girl-child, it's a peaceful sound to me. I don't think it has anything to do with Om, although they're all the same, all the soft sounds. She's a very soft sound.

I spent some time with Rick Griffin and his wife and baby, Flaven. And they're all the same, all those babies. I took acid five times when I was pregnant. I don't believe in this chromosomal damage. I think it's all hogwash; it's all a vicious plot by the establishment. I was told all the things I couldn't do when I was pregnant, and I did them all. Because, you know instinctively what you can do. I took psychedelics. I didn't feel that I had hurt her in any way. As a matter of fact, it was on an acid trip that I realized that I was pregnant—and I was only about three weeks pregnant.

What did you mean when you said "all these babies are alike"?

Babies of hippies have gotta be different from other babies—just by virtue of the fact that they are totally unrestricted. I think that hippies are more enlightened and therefore tend to be a lot freer with their children. Let's put it this way: The kids I went to high school with, well, I've seen their children. Now . . . my contemporaries . . . they are not the people I went to high school and college with . . . they are in the creative forces . . . and their children are different. And they are different because of their parents. And what they are allowed to do and say. Flaven's a beautiful child. I've heard that story about kids are high naturally, but I've seen kids that aren't high, kids who've had the high taken out of them. That's why I say those babies are all alike; like us mothers.

I hope these babies have a world to live in, I hope they have a place to go, a land to walk on. I remember when I was 10 years old, in Washington, D. C., and I lived with fear of the atom bomb that would keep me awake nights and make me wake up screaming. I used to babysit for my younger brother and sister and I'd be terrified if I heard a siren, a police car or an ambulance. I'd say, "My god, what if this is it! How do I protect them?" We used to have duck-and-cover exercises in school, where they'd ring a bell at any time of the day, sometimes five or six times a day, and we'd crawl under our desks and put our hands like this to protect the back of our necks from the bomb. We all carry that with us.

I think everybody who has a brain should get involved in politics. Working within. Not criticizing it from the outside. Become an active participant, no matter how feeble you think the effort is. I saw in that Democratic convention in Chicago that it was not feeble. There were more people interested in what I was interested in than I believed possible. I saw people crying because the minority plank on Vietnam was defeated in the platform. And I thought: Thank god! All right, so we didn't get it, but thank god there are some people in there now, in the establishment who want to change it. So let everybody be active. That's what I dig about Paul Krassner, man.



I heard he will be writing the liner notes for your album.

Yes, he is. I've known him for many, many years. I met him with Timothy Leary and I fell instantly in love with his entire mind and body, and I would do anything for him. He's a hopeless idealist. I asked him to write my liner notes and he was delighted. He asked me what to write. I said write about the Yippies or write about anything, just write what you would like people to read, it doesn't have to do with the album.

Do you think the Democratic convention and what happened in Chicago really changed many heads?

Oh, yeah. Let me talk about the head it changed in me. It made me want to work, made me feel my opinion and ideas were not futile, that there would be room in an organized movement of politics for me to voice myself and change things.

I was asked to participate in Bobby Kennedy's campaign. I thought about McCarthy and I realized I thought McCarthy was a little too lyrical, but I agreed with his ideas. I felt much stronger about McGovern; I don't know why. But I didn't participate in any way, for anyone. I was just a voyeur and watched it—to see tragedy heaped upon tragedy.

I'd say I'm gonna be active. I'm gonna do everything I can. Whatever it is, and I'm sure there are people who know what it is, and they'll tell me, I'm guilty of the sin of omission as much as anybody else. I never spoke up.

When I was in Vegas and I saw Harry Belafonte, I wanted to talk to him, I said, "Tell me what to do about fear." He asked me what I was afraid of. I said, "I don't believe what those other people believe and I don't want to have to pay dues for things that I never said and things that I never felt. Tell me

what to do when Roosevelt Grier comes running down my driveway to burn down my house. How do I run outside and say, 'Hey, man, I never said nigger and my kid's never gonna say nigger!' That's my fear—the white, liberal fear. How do you tell them that you're on their side? Which is a bigoted way of expressing it—implying there are sides. Belafonte was very moved. He just reached out and took my hand and squeezed it. He didn't say anything, he just looked at me for a long time.

Will you be campaigning now?

Yeah, on all levels. I'd like to see Paul Krassner get in. I think he could change the minds of a lot of people.

My philosophy is I'm gonna fight as hard as I can to keep all the bad things from happening. But if they are gonna happen and I happen to be in the city where they are happening—like in the sang, "California Earthquake"—then there's not much I can do about it. I can't uproot my whole life, and change my entire way of living, just because I have a feeling that things may not work out all right. There's also always the chance that everything is going to be just swell, guys. Just hang in there. But I don't think it can happen on its own.

I think the most successful way to overthrow any government is through infiltration. It's been proven for years. The dream, of course, is that there is going to be a fantastic cataclysm, and that tomorrow we have Adlai Stevenson in the White House. That's not going to happen, and not because Adlai Stevenson is dead. The reason it's not going to happen is that kind of overthrow is not possible. So I will work in the only way I know how, and that is within the establishment—because that is the only existing program. Let

someone come up with another one and if it's good, I'd do it in a second.

I know very few who are willing to die for their convictions. I wouldn't be hit on the head with a billy club or have mace squirted in my face. When I was younger and a radical at American University maybe . . . as a matter of fact, I was at the march on the Pentagon just last year, right in the front taking pictures, just being there to find out what was happening, and I was knocked down and stepped on. I don't want to do that again. It didn't accomplish anything. They lied about everything that happened. Everything in the newspapers was just lies. There were 100,000 people there, not 15,000. And it was very orderly, very well organized. They just did not tell the truth. Look, like it or not, Chicago was the truth, and all America saw it.

How important do you feel pop music is in all this?

Well, look what it's done so far. How can you negate the fact that it has mass appeal? It gets into millions of homes and lives. Like this song *Spanky and Our Gang* recorded. It turns me on so much when they sing: "And if I can make you give a damn about your fellow man . . ." Let's take the people who have latent thoughts about maybe the United States isn't always right. They hear a song like "Give a Damn" and maybe it'll awaken them. If it makes you cross that bridge between apathy and effective participation, that's great. There's so much talk about the Drug Generation and songs about drugs. That's stupid. They aren't songs about drugs, they're about life. Music can play a huge part, because it's the international communicative force.

Do you feel music should make social comment, then?

I feel that it can, and whenever possible, when they have something to say, it should be heard. I wouldn't say it has to. I wouldn't go up to the Quicksilver Messenger Service and say, "Hey, you guys ought to do a protest song because people listen to you and you're in a position of influence and you should do something about it." Yet, I do believe that. If you are in a position of influence, you should do something about it. Not necessarily inflict your opinion on other people, but if you really think you're right, you should tell it.

Does some of the material on your album reflect this attitude?

"California Earthquake" does. There's another called "Sweet Believer," which I feel . . . it's still so fresh and new to me, it's hard to say. All the songs mean something. They're not political. I must admit I didn't think of politics when I started the album. I was thinking "Who am I?" and "How do I tell people out there who I am?" Not being a writer, the only way is to sing songs that reflect my opinions.

The album was also conceived and put together before the Democratic convention.

Yes, but we had politics before we had the convention, didn't we?

Yes, but wasn't it at that point your head changed around some?

Nah. It changed around when John Kennedy was killed. When John Kennedy was killed, I really became frightened. I said: How can they do that, how can they do that . . . stuff out the white hope? And then Martin Luther King. You know the list. And many people that we don't know. And that kid, the Black Panther who was shot down with his hands over his head. Bobby Hutton. I didn't even know him. But I didn't have to know him to know it was wrong. He may have been anything. He may even have been a bad person, or a rapist, or a walking hallucinogenic drug, or anything. But he didn't have to die.

I've always been so apathetic. I figured okay, maybe the world is going to fall down around me. Now I feel . . . maybe that's motherhood, too. I want to make a better world, I want to make sure she has some place to walk around.

What do you think you'll be doing?

Christ, I hope they don't ask me to sing. But if that's what they want me to do, if that's what I can do, I'll do it.



Born: Dec. 10, 1941, St. Louis, Missouri
 Died: Dec. 15, 1962, St. Louis, Missouri
 Born: Dec. 16, 1962, St. Louis, Missouri
 Went to school, into the college part
 Got married a couple of times
 Got divorced a couple of times
 Played music
 Went to New York got hungry
 Went home
 Went to California got hungry
 Stayed
 Hung around with Billy James a lot
 Signed a recording contract with Columbia
 Wrote my autobiography

GORDON'S BUSTER
GORDON ALEXANDER

INCLUDING:
 A BUNCH OF US WERE
 SITTING AROUND
 A CANDLE
 IN SAN FRANCISCO
 GETTING
 STONED AND
 I HOPE
 YOU'RE THERE
 NEXT TIME
 TO PANCA

CS 9693

This is the autobiography of Gordon Alexander, a writer who got tired of listening to other people sing his songs. He elaborates further on his new album, "Gordon's Buster" On Columbia Records. 

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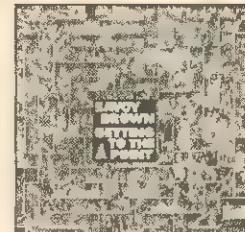


LONDON
RECORDS

SACRED BONE

BLUES BAND

are out
of sight!



LONDON

26
BY JON LANDAU

When Albert King and the trio that accompanies him in live performance take the stage they invariably start things off with an instrumental. Usually it's a slow shuffle, nice and relaxed in tempo, and Albert keeps things simple on the guitar. In the middle of the number he steps forward and introduces himself and his group and then he smiles at his audience and says, "... we're gonna let it roll all night long."

There is no loud pickup after he says it. The band just continues to swing easily letting the power of Albert's guitar continue to gradually elevate the level of tension. And by the time they get to swinging through the last two or three choruses you can hear yourself saying out loud: "Let it roll all night long."

Albert King is a huge man in his forties. He is Mississippi born, uneducated, and in many ways, an old fashioned bluesman. In live performance he plays a wide range of blues and some pop tunes which emphasize his guitar and voice about equally. His traveling band includes only organ, bass and drums.

I asked Albert about the lack of horns in his live band while he was in Boston for a weekend engagement at the Boston Tea Party, the last weekend of August. The fact is that the absence of horns lessens King's potential impact on several of his best numbers, including "Born Under A Bad Sign." Albert would like to have horns and is earning enough money so that he could probably afford them. The problem, as he puts it, is "Horn players fall in love." He went on to explain that while it is obviously the case that everybody falls in love, horn players fall in love more easily than other people.

"You laugh," he went on. "It's the truth. A guitar player goes on road and he misses his girl friend for a while but he manages to get along. A horn player gets out on the road, plays two or three towns and then he'll get lonely and next thing you know he's packed up and left. It's better not to hire him in the first place."

When King has traveled with horns in the past he has been very demanding of them. He has upon occasion paid arrangers as much as \$150 per song to arrange horn sections for his band's book. Naturally enough, he expects his men to play the arrangements exactly as written. One could surmise that therein lies another source of potential friction between King and his hornmen.

King does most of his cross country traveling in his own car, a Cadillac. Being on the road so much seems to depress him a good deal. On Saturday night he was scheduled to leave Boston immediately after the last set. The first set that evening didn't go that well. When I went back stage to talk some more with him he was extremely tense and when I mentioned that the audience had enjoyed what had obviously not been a first rate effort he got angry and said it burns him up when things weren't right with his music. He continued to talk and it rapidly became apparent that what was really upsetting him was the impending trip, this time to Los Angeles. Albert and his sidemen drive nonstop, each taking a turn at the wheel while the others get as much rest as they can. As soon as Albert started talking about dreaded cross-country drive he started thinking out loud about his eventual retirement.

King has been on the road for ten years. It has taken a lot out of him and he sometimes seems a bit bored. While he would like to slow down the pace of things a bit, he obviously isn't going to quit now. He's been kicking around a long time and it is only recently he has acquired an audience that takes more than routine interest in his music. He is earning a decent cut at the box office and has no intention of stopping. "Maybe in three or four years," he says.

While speaking of his growing audience I asked King how he felt about the interest other musicians had been taking in his music. The subject came up when someone hap-

pened to mention Jack Bruce. King didn't remember who Bruce was so I reminded him that he was the bass player from Cream. "Oh, those guys. They sure work hard. Play mighty good." I asked what he thought of the obvious influence he has had on Eric Clapton and he replied, "Last time I worked a show with them I teased them about it. They're real nice." He was excited about having worked with them.

King's own favorite guitarist is B. B. King. But he says that lately B. B. has been shucking and you have to go way back in the alley and dig his old stuff to hear him at his best. King's interests run far beyond blues and other names that are likely to come up in a discussion of music with him include Joe Turner, Count Basie, and Arthur Prysock. King particularly enjoys band vocalists like Prysock who have silky smooth voices.

You could see the smoke rising. We played mighty good." Thereafter he and Bobby Bland went upstairs to the Regal's balcony to watch Milton do his set. When Milton came on the only people applauding were the Little Milton Girls in their Little Milton sweaters. Milton then proceeded to run through his half-baked imitations of the other blues greats (Milton is known for his highly derivative styles) to an increasing amount of razzing from Bland. Pretty soon he started futzing around on the stage and before he was halfway through the set he blew the whole thing. Albert reports that Milton was so mad he thinks that he and Bland "... had some words about it. Strong words."

Who won the contest? Count Basie, hands down.

King himself is often highly derivative in his approach and prides himself on the fact that he can do

supported by everyone at Stax. Steve Cropper does a lot of technical work for King and plays rhythm guitar on many of his recordings. Booker T. does all of the horn arrangements.

King particularly enjoys working with the men at Stax. "Cold Feet," one of King's delightful singles, is an instrumental with King's voice almost mumbbling brief comments about how he and the band are just trying to come up with a hit. It seems the song was recorded after a day in the studio during which King was unable to come up with anything of commercial value. Everyone was frustrated and they decided to lay down a simple instrumental. Albert soon got to swearing at his bad luck. Most of what he said had to be taken off the record because it was unfit for AM (or FM) radio. Jim Stewart more or less ran that particular session.

There are two things one realizes after seeing King perform on a good night. The first is that his guitar playing is more limited than his vocal work. The second is that within his limits, Albert King is one of the great contemporary bluesmen.

King's guitar style is like no other. I asked him who he had learned how to play from and he answered, "Nobody. Everything I do is wrong." Indeed, it would seem so. King plays with his thumb, uses a low and unorthodox tuning, and plays a V-shaped Gibson (first brought to the public's attention by the wham of that "Memphis man," Lonnie Mack). None of this is normal.

Within the context of the bluesmen who have gotten to be well known with white audiences, Albert's frequent reliance on a shuffle tempo is also an anomaly. One of his numbers sounds very close to Arthur Smith's "Guitar Boogie Shuffle" of ten years ago. Albert likes the shuffle ("with a back-beat," if you please) because it breaks up the set. Albert needs to do that because he likes to linger over the numerous slow blues in his repertoire, the best of which is "Stormy Monday."

Albert's approach to this sort of material is very close to B. B.'s. They both rely on the slow buildup in tension with a mounting crescendo from the accompanists. However, Albert has to suffer by comparison, if for no other reason than his organist plays a Farfisa (compared to King's Hammond) and he lacks the horns which are so important in that kind of build up. Nonetheless, when King puts everything into it and lets it roll on for a couple of choruses, it achieves the desired results and you can see the people standing up and calling out to him, applauding in the middle of the breaks and clapping in time. He does get to the audience.

In live performance it is "Lucy" and "Born Under A Bad Sign," two of Albert's best recordings, that suffer most from the lack of instrumental depth. On the other hand, "As The Years Go Passing By" is somehow simpler and sweeter without the encumbrance of horns and the live version surpasses even the beauty of the studio version. "Kansas City" is also great live. On the record it has one King's greatest horn arrangements. During the singing the horns lay out of the way but when they get to the instrumental segment they play against the guitar and change the whole direction of the beat. Live, the song is turned into a guitar tour de force and the tricky horn arrangement is forgotten. The result is a wholly different arrangement, but still great. (Although neither Albert nor anyone else has ever really come up to Wilbur Harrison's "Kansas City." Little Richard's version was a whole different song and that's quite a number too.)

King is not a big one for encores. But if he comes back and plays anything, most likely it will be a shuffle. The same kind of thing that he opened the set with only a bit faster. And if it's long and it builds just right it's enough to push the audience over the top. At his best Albert King leaves you wishing he meant it when he said at the beginning, "We're gonna roll all night long."

Albert King



DAVE KROPPER

When King starts rapping he shows himself to be a marvelous raconteur. One of his stories in particular sheds some light on the kind of milieu his particular brand of blues has developed out of. A while back Little Milton and B. B. King did a concert together in Chicago. Milton came out of the concert claiming he was the new "King of the Blues" and that he had dethroned B. B. Soul magazine went so far as to report on Milton's "coronation." Albert was touring in the south at the time and got a phone call from Little Milton.

"Albert, I beat B. B. I whupped him."

"What did you beat him at? Marbles?"

"I whupped him playing the blues and now I'm gonna whup you."

Milton was obviously interested in promoting his rather lackluster career and wanted a "Battle of the Blues" to be held at Chicago's Regal theatre. The stars were to be B. B. King, Junior Parker, Bobby Bland, Albert King and Count Basie, as well as Milton. Albert agreed to appear on the condition that Milton appear between him and Bobby Bland.

When Albert finished his set he says, "... I left that stage smoking.

Ray Charles' numbers exactly as Ray does them. Likewise Arthur Prysock. Two songs on *Born Under A Bad Sign* reflect King's closeness to the Prysock tradition: "As The Years Go Passing By" and "The Very Thought of You." The two cuts are King's best vocal efforts on the album and are reason enough for concluding that King vocally is more at home with the richly melodic type of song common to that style than he is with straight blues or soul. This opinion was confirmed by the fact that "As The Years Go Passing By" was by far the single most moving performance I saw Albert do in the course of six different sets.

King is very happy at Stax. It is not widely known that he tried to get something going at Stax in the early days, back around 1962, when Jim Stewart was running the show single handedly. Nothing came of it but Albert found his way back to Stax about two and a half years ago. Almost all of the material on *Born Under A Bad Sign* originally appeared as singles, none of which ever really made it. While Al Jackson is the man who works most intimately with Albert, and is credited with being his producer, Albert is



RECORDS



The Barry Goldberg Reunion (Buddah BDS 5012)

Like most reunions, the B.G.R. gathers a family in memory of a ghost.

The musicians are all cousins in the Great Eastern Blues Family complex—Musselwhite (on harp), Eddie Hoh, Barry Goldberg. Most of them are essentially heavy sidemen. Which shows.

Goldberg's organ (probably from habit) sounds like it was recorded underwater. The organ leads are lush, throbbing mud. The effect is that of a ghostly giant spring-fed Wurlitzer haunting an abandoned roller-rink. The guitar, Harvey Mandel, relies more on his wah-wah than his music. On this album, the musicians' talents are hidden by the material and the arrangements.

Barry Goldberg arranged, conducted, and composed most of the album. The arrangements are overdone; they try hard to produce grand effects, but end up sounding garbled and confused. The musicians seem trapped inside the arrangements and at a loss what to do.

Small wonder—they are blues musicians, but Goldberg's songs are not blues. They are well-built (solo-chorus-lead-chorus-etc.) rock-and-roll songs, influenced by soul, Dylan, latter-day Stones, early Beatles, middle Spoonful, and many others.

The songs are solid-top-40 fodder, and would sound better if they were slickly produced and aimed at the teen market. Goldberg's vocals don't help much. When Buddy Miles did Goldberg's "Sittin in Circles" on the Flag album, it was great—a sun-glass-formal soul piece. But Goldberg sings it flat and makes it sound whiney and teen-aged.

A few of the songs hit something live; "Strung and Young" evokes St. Mark's Place—Haight Street at 3 a.m. as well as music can. "Sugar-Coated Love" has a rowdy, mean sound and some good manic-mechanical barrelhouse piano by Nettie Goldberg.

The album, as a whole, is frustrating. The right people doing the wrong stuff. Earnest, but mistaken.

DAVID GANCHER



Crown Of Creation, Jefferson Airplane (RCA LSP-4056)

The Jefferson Airplane, for all their commercial success and artistic importance, have had a peculiarly checkered recording career; after hearing each album in toto one gets the impression that it somehow could have been better—even if what we are given is quite admirable in many aspects. Thus *The Jefferson Airplane Takes Off* has several rock masterpieces amid mediocrities and up against the liability of a recording that is in general poorly engineered. After *Bathing at Baxter's*

can at times sound over-indulgent, particularly "Spare Chaynge," and coupled with some tight, innovative rock tracks are several highly stylized songs that fail to hold up to repeated listenings.

Style in fact is both the curse and the achievement of the Jefferson Airplane. Certainly there is a constancy to the Airplane's output (as there is to that of the Byrds) that immediately marks an Airplane Album or track by style alone. Yet the problem with style (which is not only essential but a prerequisite for any work of art) is the danger of degeneration into stylization which can become a crutch and a refuge from artistic development. The new Jefferson Airplane album, *Crown of Creation*, shows the group caught in the midst of a struggle between style and stylization, and the results are sometimes ambiguous.

Obviously one of the strong points of the Airplane, as well as the source of the group's problem, is the fact that the Jefferson Airplane has among its personnel a number of distinct and forcible stylists: Grace Slick, Jorma Kaukonen, and Marty Balin are the most obvious figures in the group in this respect. Take the case of Grace Slick: here is an obviously talented vocalist who can transform a song into something unique—but at the same time, Grace is not beneath the distorted mannerism offered up in place of thoughtful style. Her "Greasy Heart" is, by and large, a satisfactory performance, but the phrasing is, to say the least, eccentric. At times peculiar words and phrases are accented in such a way as to jump out at the listener; in "he wants to sell his paintings but the market is slow," "slow" is dragged out and given such prominence to be jarring beyond ostensible purpose. On the other hand the phrase "woman with a greasy heart, automatic man" is rendered beautifully, a nice clip being applied to "automatic." The point is that Grace is not immune to the dangers of her own style which can, through exaggeration, verge on self-parody and mannerism.

Jorma Kaukonen also has developed a distinctive style; his guitar playing owes more to Kaukonen than anyone else, which is a rarity in these days of mini-Claptons, Bloomfields and B. B. Kings. However, in contrast to Grace, Kaukonen is less likely to fall into mannered playing, although often his style contributes to a stylized texture.

Which brings us to Marty Balin, whose "Share a Little Joke" is a prime example of uninteresting Airplane. "Share a Little Joke" sounds like bits of other Airplane songs strung together, yet it makes the mistake of not being particularly cohesive, a characteristic quality of the best Airplane songs. Now "Share a Little Joke" is not a terrible track—by this fourth album, the Airplane are to the point where there is little chance that they will commit a truly howling musical blunder. But taking their music as in process of development, a song like "Share a Little Joke" is highly disappointing.

Of course *Crown of Creation* has its share of excellent moments which reflect the kind of creative rock we have come to expect from the Airplane. For instance, the use of acoustic guitars (sometimes mixed with electric guitars) on several tracks is noteworthy, especially in the case of Balin and Kantner's "In Time." On "In Time" Kaukonen, Jack Casady, and Kantner spin a gentle yet complex web that surrounds Kantner's vocal; here also Grace does a beautiful job of vocal embellishment, an object lesson to all practitioners of the art. "Ice Cream Phoenix" is an odd but effective song that sounds refreshingly dissimilar to anything the Airplane have recorded before; it includes a marvelous passage with Kaukonen and Grace phrasing together the line "the wall of your memory will echo your sorrow. . ." Unfortunately the record's ambitious closing song, "The House at Pooneil Corners," does not fare so well; it can best be described as a noble failure. To carry off an explicitly apocalyptic song is a difficult task, even for someone like Jimi Hendrix, but the Airplane nevertheless at times achieve striking success. The

song builds nicely in its churning way, and when Grace sings of "jelly & juices & bubbles—bubbles on the floor" the effect is pretty chilling. Yet for some strange reason the track is allowed to drag on for too long with little essential musical development: the chaos and drive is solidly present from the beginning, and after almost six minutes the effect begins to wear off.

Most of the rest of *Crown of Creation* is capably executed, particularly Kaukonen's solo on the otherwise undistinguished "Star Track." Kaukonen here, as elsewhere on the album, uses the wah-wah pedal, making clear that the new sound is a perfectly natural outgrowth of his earlier playing. Apart from "Greasy Heart," Grace's only other song is "Lather," which rather unsucessfully uses sound effects; apparently the Airplane saw nothing ludicrous in underlining the phrase "his mother sent newspaper clippings to him" with the sound of scissors clipping paper.

Of special interest is "Triad," a David Crosby composition. One of the great losses to the rock world was Crosby's departure from the Byrds where his writing (not to mention his singing) was always a bright spot. "Triad," with its acoustic guitar arrangement, texturally is reminiscent of the Joni Mitchell set Crosby produced; like so many Crosby songs, this one is rather sad, and (as usual with his work) "Triad" makes a haunting impression. Its inclusion in *Crown of Creation* is a big plus for the album, doing credit to both Crosby and the Airplane.

Caught between style and stylization the Jefferson Airplane seem momentarily trapped artistically in a position where they may engulf themselves through their own exemplary aesthetic efforts. *Crown of Creation* (like the other Airplane albums) has its high points, but it certainly also has its disappointing low points. Nevertheless the Airplane has steadily (if slowly) evolved, and it is refreshing to have a group refrain from rushing into Sgt. Pepper changes and instrumental augmentations. If the Airplane can avoid the pitfalls of mannered stylization there is every possibility that they will remain among the best solid rock units in the country—and perhaps then we may get, one day, the completely satisfactory album the Airplane should be capable of recording. JIM MILLER

The most impressive and moving piece in the collection is "Wouldn't You Believe It," also the most tightly composed, arranged, and performed. "In the candle, life burn away/Leaving nothing except the day Just to blow your mind away . . ." The piece conjures up the same sparse, lonely feeling as "All Along the Watchtower", both melodically and lyrically.

"Fry Me One More Time," which Guthrie bills as "an old Lyndon Johnson campaign song," is another highlight, with a great funky piano. Vocally, Guthrie's insight into country is superb.

"John Looked Down," with an inexplicable, though, for all I know, brilliant lyric, is musically compelling. "Meditation (Wave Upon Wave)" is interesting for a hard-rock (hard-folk?) use of tabla, and a sense of sadness at war with Guthrie's bouncy (what more can I say?) guitar: "All of the beautiful mountains beyond/Can surely not tempt me to stay . . . /Wave upon wave of life within me, give me the strength to go on . . ."

"Standing at the Threshold" has a curious Peter, Paul, and Mary sound. I can just see Mary Travers intensely gesticulating at the more profound lines (those with the word "love").

"The Pause of Mr. Clause" is another monologue song. The jokes are funny (once), but the song is more simple-minded than simple. Arlo should sing.

The trouble here is that, after the Beatles, Stones, Dylan, Donovan, among others, have returned to the purity of their sources, Guthrie has confused simplicity with that purity. Simplicity is fine, too, but does not as well lend itself to repetition.

ARTHUR SCHMIDT



A Saucerful of Secrets, Pink Floyd (Tower ST 5131)

The Pink Floyd were in the forefront of the self-consciously psychedelic rock movement in Britain as it developed over a year ago; they had to their credit a couple of promising singles ("Arnold Layne" and "See Emily Play") and a fairly impressive first album. *The Piper at the Gates of Dawn*. Syd Barrett (vocals and lead guitar) displayed a minor talent for writing as well as a not inessential ability to prepare special effects and production work. If much the Floyd did was based on gimmicks, Barrett at least had a keen ear that rather successfully structured gimmicks into a sort of pleasant "psychedelic chamber music."

Unfortunately the Pink Floyd's second album, *A Saucerful of Secrets*, is not as interesting as their first, as a matter of fact, it is rather mediocre. For one thing Barrett seems either to have left the group or to have given up actively participating in it; only one Barrett composition is on the new album ("Jugband Blues"), and it hardly does credit to Barrett's credentials as a composer.

With Barrett gone we are left with the work of bassist Roger Waters and organist Rick Wright. Waters (who wrote a couple of dull tracks on the first album) is an uninteresting writer, vocalist, and bass player. "Let There Be More Light" and "Set the Controls for the Heart of the Sun" are boring melodically, harmonically, and lyrically. The production work is not as glittery as the first album's, and the instrumental work is shoddy and routine; yet both tracks run some five minutes, two examples of unnecessary length in rock.

Waters' "Corporal Clegg" at least



Arlo, Arlo Guthrie (Reprise RS 6299)

Arlo Guthrie's second album is nothing if not pleasant. For that reason, if his career expands in the fashion suggested by this record, he should above all avoid being unpleasant.

The LP opens with a story-and-song rendition of "The Motorcycle Song" complete with audience participation. (The album was recorded live at the Bitter End in New York.) The charm of Guthrie's humor is that it is simple, ordinary, and gentle. Anyone can do it. Guthrie does it well. However, more than very infrequent listening to the humorous segments on this album will risk one's impatience, because of the humor's very simplicity, ordinariness, and gentleness. Repeated, it is merely blunt. Strangely enough, "The Motorcycle Song," in the melody line that ends the verse, conveys the sadness of aftermath present in many of these songs. "And I don't want to die," it ends with the pure strength of a hymn, "Just want to ride my motorcycle."

has the virtue of brevity, as well as not sounding like it was written in a drugged stupor, but its unoriginal melody is much too Beatley for these post-Sgt. Pepper days.

Rick Wright, whose organ playing is generally capable if not inventive, has also contributed a couple of songs to *"Saucer"*, "Remember a Day" itself is inoffensive, but features some rather miserable bottleneck guitar, second rate piano, and empty-sounding acoustic guitar work. Here, as throughout, Nickie Mason's drumming is busy and ineffective. Wright's "See-Saw" is a ballad scored vocally in a style incongruously reminiscent of Ronnie and The Daytinas.

The album's title track is eleven minutes of psychedelic muzak, hardly electronic music, but hardly creative rock either. There's a lot of interesting noise, and at times one almost is tempted to take the whole conglomeration as a significant experimental probe.

But as the chaos settles reassuringly into a banal organ-cum-religious chorus final, one realizes that the Pink Floyd are firmly anchored in the diatonic world with any deviations from that norm a matter of effect rather than musical conviction. Unfortunately a music of effects is a weak base for a rock group to rest its reputation on — but this is what the Pink Floyd have done.

JIM MILLER



You're Tuff Enough, Junior Wells (Blue Rock SRB 64002)

Jr. Wells' debut album on Mercury subsidiary Blue Rock is a unique combination of typically Wells styled blues, competent, sometimes exciting soul material and a fusion of the two styles in which Jr. uses his powerfully expressive voice and harp with a very good studio band and idiomatically correct soul arrangements.

This synthesis produces a very distinctive sound that combines the traditional with the contemporary. The way these three styles are used within the album represent a synthesis of soul and blues that might prevent the blues from becoming a stagnant, albeit exciting, folk music listened to only by ethnomusicologists and white liberals.

Many of the younger bluesmen such as James Cotton, Buddy Guy, Magic Sam, and Jr. Wells have used soul material in their performances and recordings. Usually these incorporations consist of James Brown and Memphis soul styled material or, as in the case of James Cotton's first album and Jr. Wells' last Vanguard album, the use of a large horn section.

Wells' Blue Rock album is far ahead of any of those mentioned above because of the ease and conviction with which Wells uses both the established styles and his own combination of the two. The whole album gives a new dimension to the contemporary blues idiom in that Jr. Wells is able to make an effective connection between soul and the blues.

The new dimension is found when Jr. Wells, because of his ability to perform convincingly in all three styles, blues, soul, and his own synthesis of the two, makes the listener unaware of any great boundary line between the styles. For example, when Otis Redding sings "Hawg for You" on *Dictionary of Soul*, you are immediately aware that this is a soul performer singing the blues. When Jr. Wells moves from "You Ought to Quit That" to "Messin' With the Kid," there is no such distinction. Jr. is able to move from one style to the other with total

credibility. The music simply flows and categorization becomes a secondary concern, because Jr. Wells is a creative performer not obsessed with pressuring a tradition-bound musical form, but yet is not locked into the stylistic clichés and artistic compromises of a commercial musical form.

What Jr. Wells is doing today may well be the first step in a synthesis that would enable blues performers to expand both their repertoire and their audience by using material that would remain unmistakably blues yet would have more commercial appeal because of its greater closeness to contemporary style. It is quite likely that a more contemporary blues style would attract the larger black audience necessary to maintain the blues as a living music.

Though the proverbial purists might rail and cry sell-out at such an idea, one must remember that the blues has kept alive because of its ability to change with contemporary influences. Muddy Waters developed the country style into an electrified city style, B. B. King bonded blues, gospel, and jazz, and if Jr. Wells and others can fuse soul into the idiom, thus giving it a more contemporary meaning, it would not be surprising to see the blues with a new dimension and a new black audience.

W. O. CUMMEROW, JR.



The Pentangle (Reprise 6315)

The Pentangle, like *Music From Big Pink*, is a musical experience which has its own identity, unlike most "pop music" today. The reason for this is simply that the musicians involved are professionals and their musical tastes and abilities have guided their careers, not dollar signs or star status.

A good stereo system is essential for fully appreciating this album, which was produced by Shel Talmy, well-known in England as a producer (the Who, the Kinks, etc.). He has done an excellent job on this album, especially since the only amplified instrument in the group is Danny Thompson's bass. Probably he used pickups on the acoustic guitars of Bert Jansch and John Renbourn on several cuts. The production job of recording the drums of Terry Cox is great and compliments the two guitars beautifully.

The fifth member of the group is singer Jacqui McShee, whose voice reminds us a little of Marianne Faithfull. Her combination of Blues and Folk stylings merge in a unique delivery, however, and one has the feeling that he's listening to a great sexy female voice.

Her stylings are best heard on the first minute of "Pentangling," which is also probably the best group effort, on "Mirage," and on "Hear My Call," a Staple Singers song. Her Blues phrasing is great on "Way Behind The Sun," "Let No Man Steal Your Tyme" shows her ability with a folk song. She also harmonizes well with Bert Jansch on two cuts.

Bert Jansch was the one responsible, more than anyone else, for forming this group. He has been well known to folk enthusiasts for many years as an excellent guitarist and songwriter. Donovan has recorded some of his material and claims to have been influenced by him.

He and John Renbourn, another well-known guitarist, form the backbone of the Pentangle. Together their guitar work on this album explores uncharted areas of the instrument's potential: they make this album a tribute to and a high point in the history of the guitar. One can find traces of Blues, Folk, Jazz and Classical forms all through the album

and especially on "Pentangling," a 7-minute-20-second excursion into many areas of music by each member of the group and also collectively.

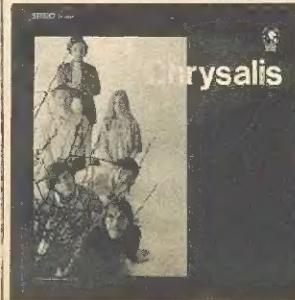
The guitars can be heard on every cut complementing each other, sliding off, or calling and responding to one another. The best individual licks can be heard on "Bruton Town," "Bells," and "Waltz," a jazz-like instrumental which has an inspired bass solo by Danny Thompson, hand clapping, and a triumphant yell signifying the end of the album.

The other half of the rhythm section, drummer Cox, has been like bassist Thompson a respected studio musician for years and really proves it on "Way Behind The Sun" and "Bells" with exceptional brush work.

Every cut on the album is good, with the group arranging most of the material. The material consists mainly of arrangements of traditional folk and blues songs and original group compositions. There is also a group adaptation of a Bert Jansch tune, "Mirage," and an excellent version of the Staple Singers' "Hear My Call."

It's refreshing to hear the clean sound of this album, not cluttered by powerful amps or added instrumentation. One can feel a closeness to the instruments that, heretofore, was a hard task in the pop music field. It is one of the best albums one will ever hear, and as the liner notes say, "Play this record to those you love."

FRED DENTE



Definition, Chrysalis (MGM SE 4547)

Frank Zappa likes this group — he praised them in an interview in Rolling Stone, and in the liner notes to *We're Only In It For The Money* there is a note about "SPIDER" (from a group that hasn't destroyed our minds yet.)

But the Mothers are Freaks, and spokesmen for the L.A. freak style, and Chrysalis are L.A. Underground People. There are resemblances, partly due to Zappa's influence, partly because there is an L.A. style; but he used pickups on the acoustic guitars of Bert Jansch and John Renbourn on several cuts. The production job of recording the drums of Terry Cox is great and compliments the two guitars beautifully.

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light, various, occasionally sarcastic.

The sarcasm is the closest point to Zappa. "Dr. Root's Garden" could be a cross between "Concentration Moon" and "Let's Make the Water Turn Black." Mustachio-twirling villain music. "What Will Because of the Morning" uses some of Zappa's (and local jazz's, again) imbalanced rhythms.

"Father's Getting Old" and "Fitzpatrick Swanson" are remakes of the Beatles theme of laughable/pitiable senility, merely unobjectionable. "Baby, Let Me Show You Where I Live" is a microcosm of Chrysalis: jerky antique-jazz rhythms (the artsy-craftsy idea of "honky-tonky"), well-executed, with clever surreal changes between the lines of the lyrics.

"Summer in Your Savage Eyes," "Lacewing" and "April Grove" (Nancy sings the last with a weird chilling inflection) are ambitious poetry. Barbour's lyrics often show false accents placed where they would never fall if the words were read for meaning alone. This would be intolerably artsy-craftsy in poetry (there's no reason to struggle with rhythms that do not grow from the poetry) but with musical support it comes off as just a weird mannerism. Barbour's poetry is quite good enough for songs, and more sophisticated than most lyrics. "Lake Hope," for instance, is beautifully erotic.

"30 Poplar" is the crowning achievement of the album. Finally, a use for all those old Dixieland riffs! The refrain (same as the title) is magical, and the picture of a groovy scene in L.A. is charming. This is an intelligent group, with a good knowledge of where they're at and what they want to say. It's questionable whether they will ever be an "influence," their style does not have the romantic appeal of blues, but they are enjoyable and worth listening to. CHARLES PERRY

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& gin Jesus voice,
bottleblue storefront
guitar.

Piano gospel handclap
screams of joy
ecclesiastical.

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amplified congregation
prays,

rain Sunday night: 10:30

Work out!
On Jesus! !

Work out!
On Jesus! !

Work out!
On Jesus! !

Work out!

Work out!

JOY!!!

—DAVID GANCHER

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BOB DYLAN BEATS ELVIS IN BRITISH POP POLL

Bob Dylan is the world's greatest singer, according to the annual poll of readers conducted by Melody Maker the British Pop Weekly. Dylan was also fourth most popular musician, right after Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix and Herb Alpert. John Wesley Harding was voted top album. Among the singers Dylan topped were Elvis Presley, 3rd; Otis Redding, 5th; Donovan, 7th; Mick Jagger, 8th; and Paul McCartney, 9th.

The top groups were the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and Cream. More of a surprise were the next six groups, all American (excluding, if you will, Jimi Hendrix, who formed his group in England): the Beach Boys, the Byrds, Hendrix, the Monkees, and Union Gap and the Doors.

There was a separate poll for best British musicians. The results were much the same as the International section, minus the Americans. Thus Donovan was 3rd, after balladeers Scott Walker and Tom Jones, Mick Jagger was 5th and Paul McCartney 7th, with John Mayall sneaking into 6th.

In the British section of the poll Julie Driscoll was top girl singer, a position she relinquished to Aretha Franklin in the International section. Julie's single of the Dylan composition "This Wheel's On Fire" was second most popular British disc, after the Stones' "Jumpin' Jack Flash." The most popular single in the International section was Elvis Presley's "U. S. Male."

Ray Charles:

—Continued from Page 8
that's a bad choice of word, but I do believe it's good to have property. I mean, this business, you never know what's going to happen.

"The way I see it, you have no guarantee because the public can change. You may work as well as ever, but you may not always just have that rapport with them."

"That's why I say it's necessary to look ahead while you're earning. An artist, if he's smart, will set himself up in some other ways besides music. You know, while he can."

Charles, who is an animated restless kind of conversationalist, given to emphasizing points by slapping his thigh or gesturing with his hands, demanded a cigarette from his valet and was silent for a minute or two.

I had asked if he still wrote any arrangements, and now he said: "I don't write much myself, though I sometimes tell the arrangers what I want. Maybe I'll do two or three songs a year. It takes time, and really I don't have that much."

We talked about the type of accompaniment he preferred. "Right," he said. "A big band. Nothing to beat that and I've no plans to change it."

Correspondence:

—Continued from Page 3
distorts the music whether played in monaural or stereo, it is still based on the original material.

What record companies are experiencing with now is such things as capstan delays and other artificial means of creating a stereo expanse at the total expense of the original material.

In rock and roll, a good example is the Beach Boys' Pet Sounds. Comparing the mono to the stereo version, you will notice an elaborate system of ping pong echos and low and high re-channeling. This is called "Duophony" and the album notes call it a technological breakthrough in the recreation of realism for stereo systems or something like that.

No matter whether you play album in mono or stereo, it is still a total bastardization, especially when record reviewers keep pointing out Brian Wilson's interest in the complete control of the recording mix. Whatever subtle balances he aims for are destroyed. I'm comparing the album to the mono singles, I never heard the mono album, so I could be wrong.

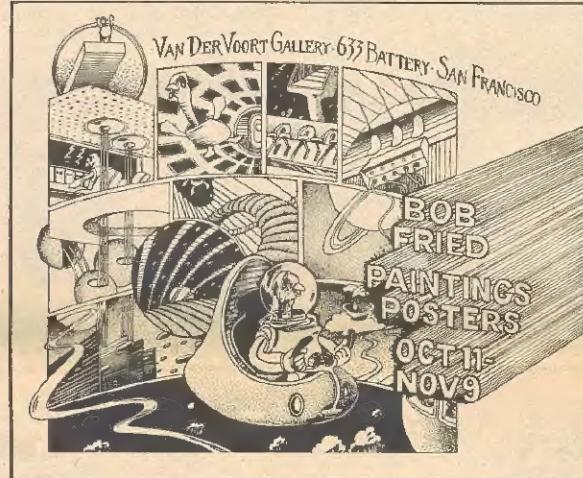
Actually, I think most of the albums from England that were recorded in mono only have already been pressed, like Donovan and Rolling Stones, and although the sound is inferior, they stick to the original sound. The Beach Boys I don't think ever recorded in stereo (maybe *Smiley Smile*, I don't know), and therefore collectors ought to buy up the mono copies of their albums (which are already in the bargain bins around here).

For the future, I worry about people like Jerry Lee Lewis and others. I'm sure someday they will release albums with the old classic rock and roll records on them. And when they make them for stereo, they will probably pollute them a lot more than they did the Rolling Stones or Donovan. The Elvis Presley Golden Hits albums are recorded with a delay on the second stereo channel, so that you hear double of everything.

What about records by Bessie Smith, Louis Armstrong, and others where they are working with 78 originals? What about mono symphonies and great musical performances of all kinds?

The record buyer is doomed.

FRANK ROSIN
EAST NORWICH, N.Y.



THE MELODY MAKER is the world's most authoritative pop, jazz and folk weekly. From London we cover the entire international music scene. The MELODY MAKER is packed with news about the latest and greatest sounds. No music fan today can afford to miss the MELODY MAKER.

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Free space is provided here for hungry musicians: If you need a gig, are looking for someone to play with or something to play, feel free to mail us your ad, short and to the point. If you have something to sell, on the other hand, you pay (\$2.50 per line, enclosed with the ad). Be sure to indicate city and state when you mail your ad to: Musicians' Classified, 746 Brannan Street, San Francisco, California 94108.

SAF FRANCISCO

DRUMMER NEEDED for original rock group with recording contract and gigs. Must be strong but sensitive. Ken — 621-6454, 80 Brady, San Francisco.

CHERRY RED Guild Starfire III, with drums, sans tornorn: Stoien, Embarcadero, San Francisco.

STOLEN AX: Gibson solid body bass, single pick-up, red finish, cracked varnish. \$150. 10, San Francisco.

BASS, RHYTHM guitar (or organ) wanted for original heavy rock group. Joe — 456-6516, Fairfax, Calif.

DRUMMER 27, professional, union member. Available for steady gig three nights/week or more. Please call 9:00 PM or write Bob — (415) 662-0952, P.O. Box 8051, Oakland, Calif.

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LOS ANGELES
GUITAR, BASS, rhythm guitar and drummer needed for two new singers to form group. Send resume to Robert A. Johnson, 6750 Franklin Place, Hollywood.

NEW YORK AREA

FEMALE LEAD singer — big voice, good-looking, designs own groovy costumes, plays guitar — seeks work with serious established rock group. Sasha — MU 4-3426, Boston.

MASSACHUSETTS
BASS WANTED — must have own equipment and be able to sing lead to Cream and Yardbird material. Charlie — TU 9-1199, Boston.

DRUMMER/ORGANIST or bass needed to complete group destined to make it. Has English rock band. Must be dedicated and have good head. Mike — 868-6681, Boston.

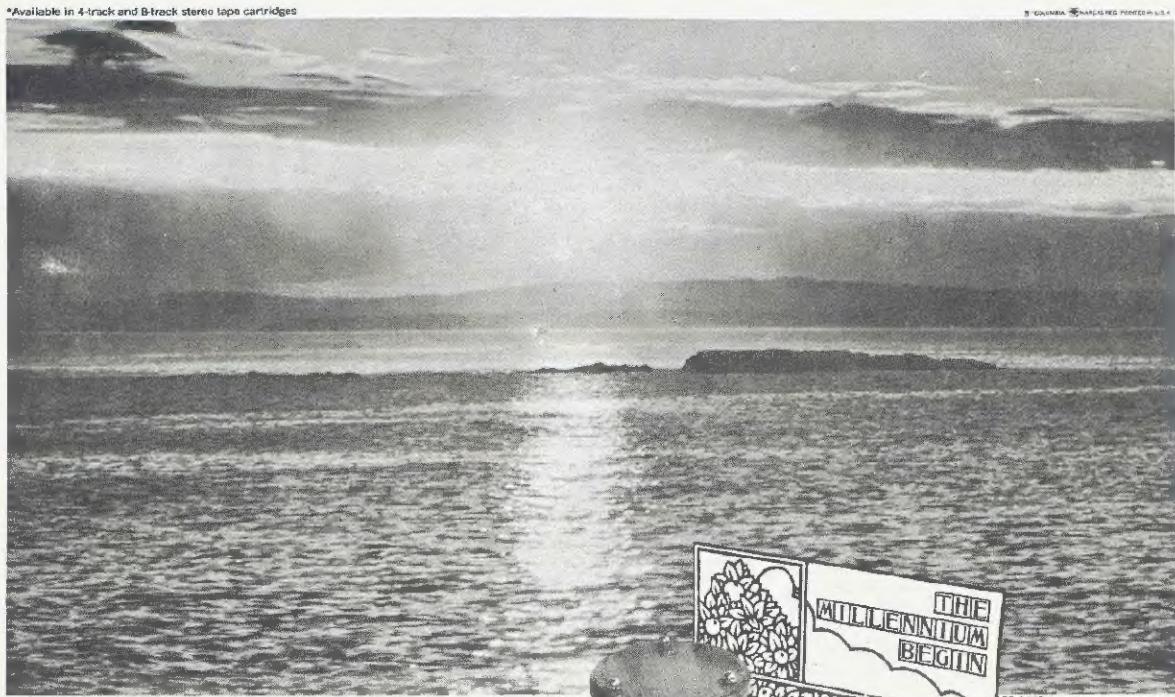
WANTED: FEMALE rhythm guitar for Ariel, all-girl rock group. Must have good ear, rhythmic sense, strong medium-range voice, increased motivation. Pam — (413) 532-4416, 12 Silver St., South Hadley, Mass.

SOUTHERN STATES

BLUES BASSIST wants to join or form blues band in the south. No soul music. Jerry Morris, 1818 North Fourth Street, Durant, Oklahoma.

EXPERIENCED FEMALE drummer available to go on road with good rock or jazz group. D. Jay — 2504 Central Ave., Tampa, Fla.

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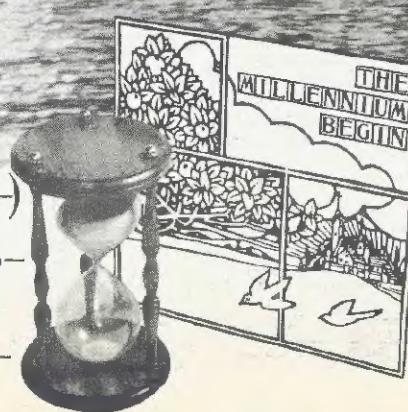
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